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SPARTACIST



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The SWP and the Fourth International, 1946-54:

Genesis of Pabloism

The American Socialist Workers Party and the European Pabloists travelled at different rates along different paths to revisionism, to converge in uneasy alliance in the early 1960's in an unprincipled "reunification," which has now broken down as the American SWP has completed the transition from Pabloist centrism to outright reformism. The "United Secretariat" which issued out of the 1963 "reunification" teeters on the edge of an open split; the "anti-revisionist" "International Committee" fractured last year. The collapse of the various competing pretenders to the mantle of the Fourth International provides a crucial opportunity for the reemergence of an authentic Trotskyist international tendency. Key to the task of reconstructing the Fourth International through a process of splits and fusions is an understanding of the characteristics and causes of Pabloist revisionism and the flawed response of the anti-Pabloists who fought, too little and too late, on national terrain while in practice abandoning the world movement.

World War II: U.S. and France

Before the onset of the war, Trotsky and the Fourth International had believed that decaying capitalism and the rise of fascism removed the possibility for reformism and therefore for bourgeois-democratic illusions among the masses. Yet they could not but become increasingly aware that the revulsion of the working class against fascism and the threat of fascist occupation gave rise to social chauvinism and a renewal of confidence in the "democratic" bourgeoisie permeating the proletarian masses throughout Europe and the U.S. Faced with such a contradiction, the powerful pressures of nationalist backwardness and democratic illusions in the working class tended to pull the sections of the Fourth International apart, some adopting a sectarian stance, others capitulating to the social patriotism which was rampant among the masses. The SWP briefly adopted the "Proletarian

Military Policy" which called for military training under trade union control, implicitly posing the utopian idea that U.S. workers could fight German fascism without the existence of a workers state in the U.S., through "controlling" U.S. imperialism's army. British Trotskyist Ted Grant went even further, in one speech referring to British imperialism's armed forces as "our Eighth Army." The German IKD returned to outright Menshevism with the theory that fascism had brought about the need for "an intermediate stage fundamentally equivalent to a democratic revolution." ("Three Theses," 19 October 1941)

The French Trotskyist movement, fragmented during the course of the war, was the best example of the contradiction. One of its fragments subordinated the mobilization of the working class to the political appetites of the Gaullist wing of the imperialist bourgeoisie; another grouping renounced any struggle within the resistance movement in favor of work exclusively at the point of production and, not recognizing the existing level of reformist consciousness among the workers, adventurously attempted to seize the factories during the "liberation" of Paris while the working masses were out on the streets. The February 1944 European Conference document which was the basis for a fusion between two French groupings to form the Parti Communiste Internationaliste characterized the two groups:

"Instead of distinguishing between the nationalism of the defeated bourgeoisie which remains an expression of its imperialist preoccupations, and the 'nationalism' of the masses which is only a reactionary expression of their resistance against exploitation by the occupying imperialism, the leadership of the POI considered as progressive the struggle of its own bourgeoisie. . . ."

"the CCI . . . under the pretext of guarding intact the heritage of Marxism-Leninism, refused obstinately to

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The Case of Bala Tampoe

Suppressed Documents Expose United Secretariat

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The Road from the SWP to Trotskyism

Resignations from the SWP-YSA

The statement of resignation from the Socialist Workers Party in favor of a fusion perspective with the Spartacist League, printed immediately below, is from comrades who have made the difficult transition from the reformism of the SWP to Trotskyism. They originated out of the complex process around the last SWP Convention (August 1971). Two left oppositions emerged in that Convention period: the Communist Tendency in Boston, a handful associated with one David Fender, and the much looser Proletarian Orientation tendency which amassed perhaps a hundred supporters by Convention time. The CT took a more left-wing and multifaceted stance; the PO as its name implies centered upon involving the SWP in the working-class movement. After the Convention the PO formally dissolved and in fact began disintegrating even before the post-Convention period. Of the older more prominent individuals drawn to or associated with the PO (Larry Turner, Hedda Garza, Harry DeBoer, Paul Boutelle), most simply capitulated to the party majority. The surviving right PO elements headed by Ralph Lewis seem to place their future hopes on the centrist European United Secretariat in the latter's incipient rupture with the reformist American SWP. The more radical left PO elements around Barbara Gregorich formally constituted a "Leninist Faction" within the SWP.

Meanwhile Fender and the CT early got themselves thrown out of the SWP, then split from each other. The CT, after a weeks-long attempt to conquer the American proletariat independently as the "Committee for a Workers Government," liquidated into the third-camp International Socialists, though not without swearing to all and sundry that they have not sold out but are rather on a vicious wrecking Trotskyite entry. Fender has signed on as co-editor of Harry Turner's "Vanguard Newsletter" to produce one of the more rotten little blocs of all time. The VNL is not only non-democratic-centralist itself 'ut projects and seeks to work through its "Committees for Rank and File Caucuses," a hypothetical united front in willful substitution for the aim of a Leninist party. The record of the combined VNL-CRFC crew to date, to take the China question for example, is the "unity" of the pro-Maoist Turner and the pro-Liu Shao-chiist Fender, along with the sometime inclusion of the self-styled left pro-Lin Piaoist Bob Ross. In addition the CRFC swamp encompasses "Socialist Forum," some semi-ex-DeLeonist

14 August 1972

*Political Committee, Socialist Workers Party
National Executive Committee,
Young Socialist Alliance*

We, the undersigned, hereby resign from the SWP and the YSA. We take this step as the culmination of our previously declared support within the SWP to the Declaration of the Leninist Faction of 15 May 1972 or, in the case of the YSA member, of our present solidarity with the politics of that Declaration.

In accordance with the programmatic parallelism of our political position with that of the Spartacist League of the U.S., and as principled and serious revolutionists, we intend to seek fusion with the SL. We call upon all others in basic agreement with our views to adopt the same perspective.

Fraternally,

*Paul A., SWP (Washington D.C.),
Jeff B., SWP (Oakland-Berkeley)
Dave P., SWP (Washington, D.C.)
Martha P., SWP (Washington, D.C.)
Ron P., YSA (New York City)*

elements who presumably think all the Chinese are simply Stalinist totalitarians but that probably it is not very important since it is not an American question. Just before picking up Fender who is some kind of extreme "socialist" militarist i.e. an enthusiast of his own version of an ultra Proletarian Military Policy, Turner had fortuitously broken, over questions of international maneuvering, with a "socialist" draft dodger, Bob Sherwood, resident in Canada. But Turner-Fender do have a principled basis of a sort for their amalgam: Turner's VNL had gone along with support to the New York cops' strike (Turner was chasing the strongly pro-cop Workers League at the time) while most recently Fender as a VNL representative precipitated the forcible opening by campus cops of a WL "public" meeting in St. Louis where, as usual, the WL was forcibly excluding known radical opponents.

The record of the attempt of elements standing between the reformism of the "Trotskyist" SWP and the revolutionary Marxism of the Trotskyist Spartacist League to transcend their centrist limitations ranges in the main from the pathetic to the sordid.

The most characteristic nostrum seen as an antidote to the SWP's revisionism is a particularly trivial species of work-erism. Real revolutionary syndicalists, while they believe in

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concentrating all their effort and attention upon the class struggle at the point of production hence denying and liquidating crucial aspects of Leninism in the struggle to conquer power, at least focus on the class struggle. But much of the thrust of the oppositions born in the SWP is instead a yearning to be "at one" with the proletariat, a sentimental petty-bourgeois moralist felt belief that the be-all and end-all of the work of real revolutionists is simply to be immersed, hopefully continuously, in the real proletarian milieu—very different from the Leninist implantation of hard communist fractions at calculated spots within the labor movement.

The SWP oppositionists' disorientation reflects two interconnected deep-seated obstacles to achieving a bona fide revolutionary outlook. The first is that the SWP is very far from revolutionary politics, and in very many ways—hence the road from it to Trotskyism is long and tortuous. The second is that the American working class in recent decades has given little concrete empirical example of its real capacities in class struggle to the isolated panacea- and revisionism-prone radical movement. Hence it is difficult for even those with a subjective will to assimilate the historical and international experiences of Bolshevism and Trotskyism. But if experience in revolutionary politics is not easy to acquire in contemporary America, the catastrophes of petty centrist opportunism can and do teach a minority of revolutionary aspirants the lessons through hard knocks. The comrades now resigning from the SWP are by no means the last to come to Bolshevism from the still continuing interactions of the floundering SWP oppositional elements as they are driven to confront real programmatic alternatives.

Declaration of Leninist Faction

1. As Trotskyists we are first and foremost proletarian internationalists. Today, though, we see not one single,

homogeneous Fourth International (World Party of Socialist Revolution), but five separate international groups all claiming to be either the Fourth International itself, or separate "factions" of it. The shattering of the Fourth International originally constructed by Trotsky, Cannon, Sedov, Klement, and others had its basis in the isolation from the working masses after World War II, and the methodology and positions adopted at the Third World Congress in 1951.

At the Third World Congress, adaptation to non-revolutionary currents took place, which resulted in the adoption of positions which negated the need for the Leninist vanguard party. These positions, based on impressionism and empiricism, were not decisively fought at the time of the 1952-53 split nor during the reunification of 1963. The result is that they still exist within the United Secretariat today.

2. The majority of the United Secretariat is currently adapting to peasant forces in Latin America, while the Canadian led minority (with fraternal SWP support) seeks to adapt to petty bourgeois and new middle class sectors. Neither strategy sees the industrial working class as the key to the revolution. Therefore, in the current dispute within the United Secretariat, we can support neither side.

Other international groupings have fared no better. About the International Secretariat of Posadas with its call for a nuclear first strike by the Soviet Union, or the Revolutionary

This is the first issue of *Spartacist* since the inauguration of the new monthly *Workers Vanguard* a year ago. At that time *Workers Vanguard* was described as part of the transformation of the Spartacist League into the nucleus of the vanguard party, and of the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International. The role of *Spartacist* is to stress the polemical, theoretical and internationally directed aspects of these tasks. Hence the editors look forward to *Spartacist* becoming the organ of the Spartacist tendency internationally, as a step in the struggle for rebirth of the Fourth International.

—The Editorial Board

Marxist Tendency of Pablo with its deep entry in the Australian Communist Party, little need be said. The International Committee, led by G. Healy, can be characterized as both sectarian and opportunist, or "sectarians afraid of their own opportunism," with outright reactionary positions on such issues as women's liberation.

3. Errors similar to those of the United Secretariat are found within the current program of our party, the Socialist Workers Party.

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...SWP

4. The declaration that the Cuban Revolution had produced a healthy workers state without the intervention of the vanguard Leninist (i.e. Trotskyist) party represented a political denial of the need for such a party. This denial is outright political liquidationism. We declare that the current Cuban state is a deformed workers state and has been so from the very instant of its existence. In order for Cuba to become a healthy workers state, a political revolution is required just as in the degenerated workers state of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states such as China and the Eastern European states. Such a political revolution has as its most important task the establishment of institutionalized forms of workers democracy and the political destruction of the Stalinist theories of socialism in one country and peaceful coexistence.

5. The party majority has come more and more to base its program on bourgeois ideologies (such as nationalism and feminism) within the workers' movement. While we support the liberation of women and of the various national, ethnic, and racial groups oppressed by U.S. capitalism, we believe that such liberation will only be achieved by a successful proletarian revolution within the United States. While the party's current feminist politics imply that women-as-women can end their oppression, and its nationalist politics imply that nations as nations can end national oppression, we say that this is a poly-vanguardist approach. Only the working class, organized as a class and led by the vanguard party can liberate all humanity. Consequently, our most important task is to further the development of class consciousness which will link all sectors of the working class in a common struggle against the oppression that the various groups within the class currently face. We do not simply oppose such ideologies as feminism and nationalism. Rather, the nationalists and feminists are conscious of their oppression, but with a false consciousness (i.e., an ideology). What is necessary is to utilize the strategy contained in *The Death Agony of Capitalism* and the *Tasks of the Fourth International* to destroy this false consciousness and replace it with its opposite by raising it to a qualitatively higher level—from bourgeois ideology to revolutionary class consciousness.

6. While we give unconditional support to the military battle being waged by the Vietnamese against United States imperialism, a revolutionary defense of the Vietnamese Revolution requires both its defense against the Stalinist bureaucracy as well as U.S. imperialism. Such a defense requires the preparation of the proletariat for its historic task of seizing state power. The party approaches the question of the war in a single-issue pacifist fashion. The party has **not begun** to build a mass movement that can defend the Vietnamese revolution, either from imperialism or its Stalinist misleadership. The majority sees no need to defend the Revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy currently in the leadership of the struggle. Having seen the bureaucracy sell out the interests of the Vietnamese workers in the past, we will see them continue to do so in the future, until the struggle

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...Pabloism (Continued from page 1)

distinguish the nationalism of the bourgeoisie from the resistance movement of the masses."

I. SWP ISOLATIONISM

European Trotskyism and American Trotskyism responded in initially different ways to different tasks and problems following World War II. The precarious internationalism of the American SWP, maintained through intimate collaboration with Trotsky during his exile in Mexico, did not survive the assassination of Trotsky in 1940 and the onset of world war. The American Trotskyists retreated into an isolation only partially forced upon them by the disintegration of the European sections under conditions of fascist triumph and illegitimation.

Anticipating the difficulties of international coordination during the war, a resident International Executive Committee had been set up in New York. Its only notable achievement, however, appears to have been the convening of an "Emergency Conference" of the International, held 19-26 May 1940 "somewhere in the Western Hemisphere," "on the initiative of its U.S., Mexican and Canadian sections." A rump conference attended by less than half of the sections, the "Emergency Conference" was called for the purpose of dealing with the international ramifications of the Shachtman split in the U.S. section, which had resulted in the defection of a majority of the resident IEC. The meeting solidarized with the SWP in the faction fight and reaffirmed its status as the one U.S. section of the Fourth International. The conference also adopted a "Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution" written by Trotsky. Following Trotsky's death, however, the resident IEC lapsed into oblivion.

At least in hindsight, the American section of the Fourth International should have initiated a clandestine secretariat in a neutral country in Europe, staffed by qualified SWPers and emigres from other sections, to centralize and directly supervise the work of Trotskyists in fascist-occupied countries. But the SWP was content to limit its international activities during the war to the publication in its internal bulletins of letters and factional documents from European Trotskyists. The passage of the Voorhis Act in 1941 inhibiting U.S. groups from affiliation with international political organizations—a law which to this day has never been tested—also gave the SWP a rationalization for downplaying its international responsibilities.

The SWP's work during the war did evidence an internationalist perspective. SWP longhorem used the opportunity of ships from Vladivostok docking on the West Coast to clandestinely distribute Trotsky's "Letter to Russian Workers" in Russian to the Soviet seamen. The SWP concentrated its merchant marine comrades on the supply runs to Murmansk until the extremely heavy casualties compelled the party to discontinue the Murmansk concentration. (It was in response to such activities that the GPU was directed to activate the Soblen anti-Trotskyist espionage net. Testimony years afterward revealed that Cannon's telephone was tapped by the GPU and that the business manager of the SWP's *Fourth International* magazine, one "Michael Cort," was one

of the GPU agents.) But the maintenance and direction of the Fourth International was part of the SWP's internationalist responsibility, and should have been a priority as urgent as the work which the SWP undertook on its own.

The leadership of the SWP came through the war period essentially intact, but reinforced in its insularity and ill-equipped theoretically to deal with the post-war situation.

During the later years of the war and the immediate post-war period, the SWP had registered some impressive successes in implanting its cadres in industry during the boom and in recruiting a new layer of proletarian militants drawn to the Trotskyists because of their opposition to the Communist Party's policies of social patriotism and class peace.

Optimism and Orthodoxy

The SWP entered the post-war period with buoyant optimism about the prospects for proletarian revolution. The 1946 SWP Convention and its resolution, "The Coming American Revolution," projected the indefinite continuation of successes for the SWP. The isolationist perspective of the Party was in evidence at the Convention. The necessarily international character of crises and revolutions is recognized, but not the concomitant international character of the vanguard party. The resolution in effect makes excuses for the political backwardness of the U.S. working class while praising its militancy and presents the following syllogism: the decisive battles of the world revolution will be fought in the advanced countries where the means of production are highly developed and the proletariat powerful—above all in the U.S.; therefore all that is necessary is to build the American revolution and world capitalism will be overthrown. Profound impressionism led the SWP to see the world through the eyes of American capitalism which had emerged from the war as the unquestioned pre-eminent capitalist world power.

The post-war stabilization of European capitalism, the emergence of the Stalinist parties as the dominant reformist workers parties in Europe, the expansion of Stalinism in Eastern Europe (apparently flying in the face of the Trotskyist analysis that Stalinism could only betray), the destruction of capitalism by peasant-based nationalist-Stalinist formations in Yugoslavia and China—all these developments posed new theoretical problems for the Trotskyist movement which the SWP, stripped of a layer of talented intellectuals by the petty-bourgeois Shachtman split and shortly thereafter deprived of Trotsky's guidance, could not handle. The SWP's immediate response was to retreat into a sterile "orthodoxy" stripped of real theoretical content, thus rendering its isolation more complete.

The 1950's brought a new wave of spontaneous working-class struggles in West and East Europe, but to the SWP they brought the onset of the Cold War witchhunt: the Smith Act prosecutions of CPers and former CPers; the deadening of every aspect of social and intellectual life; the relentless purge of known "reds" and militants from the union movement, severing the SWP's connection with the working-class movement which had taken years to build up; the dropping away of the whole layer of workers recruited to the SWP during the late 1940's. The objective pressure to become a mere cheering section for European and colonial

developments was strong but the SWP hung on to its verbal orthodox commitment to making the American revolution.

II. THE BREAK IN CONTINUITY IN EUROPE

The vulnerability of the European Trotskyist movement to revisionism hinged on the historic weaknesses of the European organizations combined with the thorough shattering of their continuity to the earlier period. When Trotsky in 1934 launched the struggle to found the Fourth International, the European working class, confronted with the decisive choice of socialism or barbarism, lacked a communist leadership. The task facing the Fourth Internationalists was clear: to mobilize the class against the threat of fascism and

"By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historic tasks. Opportunists find international control intolerable and they reduce their international ties as much as possible to harmless formalities... on the proviso that each group does not hinder the others from conducting an opportunist policy to its own national task... International unity is not a decorative facade for us, but the very axis of our theoretical views and our policy. Meanwhile there are not a few ultra-Lefts... [who] carry on a semi-conscious struggle to split up the Communist Opposition into independent national groups and to free them from international control."

(Leon Trotsky, "The Defense of the Soviet Union and the Opposition," 7 September 1929)

"We stand not for democracy in general but for *centralist* democracy. It is precisely for this reason that we place national leadership above local leadership and international leadership above national leadership."

(Leon Trotsky, "An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund," 6 February 1930)

war, to amass the cadres for the world revolutionary party which would stand for proletarian internationalism in the face of the march toward imperialist war and the social chauvinist capitulation of the Second and Third Internationals. But Trotsky had noted the immense difficulty for the conscious vanguard to go forward in a period of crushing defeat for the class and the "terrible disproportion between the tasks and the means." ("Fighting Against the Stream," April 1939) The weakness of the European movement was exemplified by the French section, which was repeatedly criticized by Trotsky and whose petty-bourgeois "workerist" deviation and dilettantism were the subject of a special resolution at the founding conference of the Fourth International in 1938.

The Fourth International geared itself up for the decisive struggle against fascism and war—and lost. During the course of the war and the Nazi occupations the very rudiments of international, and even national, coordination were destroyed. The International disintegrated into small groups of militants pursuing improvised policies: some opportunist, some heroic. The 65 French and German comrades who were

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...Pabloism

shot by the Gestapo in July 1943 because of their revolutionary defeatist fraternization and the building of a Trotskyist cell in the German armed forces are a monument to the internationalist courage of a weak revolutionary movement fighting against insurmountable odds.

Trotskyist Cadres Decimated

In August 1943 an attempt was made to reestablish the rudiments of organization in Europe. The European Secretariat set up at this meeting in Belgium included exactly one surviving member of the pre-war leadership and largely as a result of the nonexistence of tested cadres, Michel Pablo (Raptis), a skilled clandestine organizer not known for ability as a political leader or theoretician, emerged as the head of the International. When in June 1945 a European Executive Committee met to prepare for the holding of a World Congress, the experienced leading cadres and the most promising of the young Trotskyists (A. Leon, L. Lesoil, W. Held) had been killed at the hands of the Nazis or the GPU. The continuity of Trotskyism in Europe had been broken. This tragic process was duplicated elsewhere with the imprisonment and eventual execution of Ta Thu-tau and the Vietnamese Trotskyists, the virtual extinction of the Chinese Trotskyists and the liquidation of the remaining Russian Trotskyists (including, besides Trotsky, Ignace Reiss, Rudolf Klement and Leon Sedov). The Europeans were apparently so starved for experienced leading cadres that Pierre Frank (leading member of the Molinier group which Trotsky denounced as "demoralized centrists" in 1935 and expelled in 1938 for refusing to break with the French social-democracy after the "French Turn") was enabled to become a leader of the post-war French section.

At this crucial juncture the intervention and leadership of a truly internationalist American Trotskyist party might have made a great difference. But the SWP, which should have assumed leadership in the International throughout the war years, was sunk in its own national preoccupations. Cannon noted later that the SWP leadership had deliberately built up Pablo's authority, even going "so far as to soft-pedal a lot of our differences" (June 1953). The urgent responsibility of the SWP, which whatever its deficiencies was the strongest and most experienced Trotskyist organization, was precisely the opposite.

III. ORTHODOXY REASSERTED

The immediate task facing the Trotskyists after the war was to reorient its cadres and reassess the situation of the vanguard and the class in light of previous projections. The Trotskyists' expectations of tottering West European capitalist regimes and the renewal of violent class struggle throughout Europe, and especially in Germany where the collapse of Nazi state power left a vacuum, had been confirmed. However the reformists, particularly the Stalinist parties, reasserted themselves to contain the spontaneous working-class upsurges. Control of the French working class through the CGT passed from the social democracy (SFIO) which had controlled the CGT before the war to the French Stalinists. Thus despite the manifest revolutionary spirit of the European working class and the great waves of general

strikes, especially in France, Belgium, Greece and Italy, throughout West Europe, the proletariat did not take power and the Stalinist apparatus emerged with new strength and solidity.

The Fourth International responded by falling back on sterile orthodoxy and stubborn refusal to believe that these struggles had been defeated for the immediate period:

"Under these conditions partial defeats...temporary periods of retreat...do not demoralize the proletariat.... The repeated demonstration by the bourgeoisie of its inability to restabilize an economy and political regime of the slightest stability offers the workers new opportunities to go over to even higher stages of struggle.

"The swelling of the ranks of the traditional organizations in Europe, above all the Stalinist parties...has reached its peak almost everywhere. The phase of decline is beginning."

(European Executive Committee, April 1946)

Right-opportunist critics in the Trotskyist movement (the German IKD, the SWP's Goldman-Morrow faction) were correct in noting the over-optimism of such an analysis and in pointing out that the traditional reformist leaderships of the working class are always the first inheritors of a renewal of militancy and struggle. Their "solution," however, was to argue for a limitation of the Trotskyist program to bourgeois-democratic demands, and such measures as critical support to the post-war French bourgeois Constitution. Their advocacy of an entrism policy toward the European reformist parties was dismissed out of hand by the majority, which expected the workers to more or less spontaneously regroup under the Trotskyist banner. This attitude prepared the way for a sharp reversal on the entrism question when the implicit position of ignoring the reformists' influence could no longer be maintained.

The Fourth International's immediate post-war perspective was summed up by Ernest Germain (Mandel) in an article called "The First Phase of the European Revolution" (Fourth International, August 1946). The title already implies the outlook: "the revolution" was implicitly redefined as a metaphysical process enduring continuously and progressing inevitably toward victory, rather than a sharp and necessarily time-limited confrontation over the question of state power, the outcome of which will shape the entire subsequent period.

Stalinophobia

The later, Pabloist, capitulation to Stalinism was prepared by impressionistic overstatement of its opposite: Stalinophobia. In November 1947 Pablo's International Secretariat wrote that the Soviet Union had become:

"a workers state degenerated to the point where all progressive manifestations of the remains of the October conquest are more and more neutralized by the disastrous effects of the Stalinist dictatorship."

"What remains of the conquests of October is more and more losing its historic value as a premise for socialist development."

"...from the Russian occupation forces or from pro-Stalinist governments, which are completely reactionary, we do not demand the expropriation of the bourgeoisie...."

Within the SWP, the rumor circulated that Cannon was flirting with the characterization that the Soviet Union had become a totally degenerated workers state, i.e., a "state

capitalist" regime—a position which Natalia Trotsky shortly embraced.

On the question of the Stalinist expansion into East Europe, the Fourth International was united in simple-minded orthodoxy. An extensive discussion of "The Kremlin in Eastern Europe" (Fourth International, November 1946) by E. R. Frank (Bert Cochran) was shrill in anti-Stalinist tone and tended toward the view that the countries occupied by the Red Army would be deliberately maintained as capitalist states. A polemic against Shachtman by Germain dated 15 November 1946 was still more categorical: the theory of "a degenerated workers state being installed in a country where there has not yet previously been a proletarian revolution" is dismissed, simply, as "absurd." And Germain rhetorically queries, "Does [Shachtman] really think that the Stalinist bureaucracy has succeeded in overthrowing capitalism in half of our continent?" (Fourth International, February 1947)

The methodology here is the same as that pursued, more cynically, by the "International Committee" in later years over the question of Cuba (perplexed? then deny reality!) with the difference that the class character of East Europe, with capitalist economic institutions but the state power held by the occupying army of a degenerated workers state, was far more difficult to understand. Empiricists and renegades, of course, had no difficulty in characterizing the East European states:

"Everyone knows that in the countries where the Stalinists have taken power they have proceeded, at one or another rate of speed, to establish exactly the same economic, political, social regime as exists in Russia. Everyone knows that the bourgeoisie has been or is rapidly being expropriated, deprived of all its economic power, and in many cases deprived of mortal existence . . . Everyone knows that what remnants of capitalism remain in those countries will not even be remnants tomorrow, that the whole tendency is to establish a social system identical with that of Stalinist Russia."

(Max Shachtman, "The Congress of the Fourth International," October 1948 New International)

Excruciating as this ridicule must have been for them, however, the orthodox Trotskyists were trapped in their analysis because they could not construct a theory to explain the East Europe transformation without embracing non-revolutionary conclusions.

Germain, as was typical for him in those years, at least posed the theoretical dilemma clearly: is the Trotskyist understanding of Stalinism correct if Stalinism shows itself willing in some cases to accomplish any sort of anti-capitalist social transformation? Clinging to orthodoxy, the Trotskyists had lost a real grasp of theory and suppressed part of Trotsky's dialectical understanding of Stalinism as a parasitic and counter-revolutionary caste sitting atop the gains of the October Revolution, a kind of treacherous middle-man poised between the victorious Russian proletariat and world imperialism. Having thus reduced dialectical materialism to static dogma, their disorientation was complete when it became necessary to answer Germain's question in the affirmative, and the way was prepared for Pabloist revisionism to leap into the theoretical void.

Fourth International Flirts with Tito

Virtually without exception the Fourth International was disoriented by the Yugoslav revolution. After some twenty

years of Stalinist monolithism, the Trotskyists were perhaps ill-disposed to scrutinize the anti-Stalin Yugoslav CP too carefully. The Yugoslav Titoists were described as "comrades" and "left centrists," and Yugoslavia as "a workers state established by a proletarian revolution." In one of several "Open Letters" to Tito, the SWP wrote: "The confidence of the masses in it [your party]" will grow enormously and it will become the effective collective expression of the interests and desires of the proletariat of its country." The Yugoslav revolution posed a new problem (later recapitulated by the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese experiences): unlike East Europe, where the social transformations were accomplished by the army of a foreign degenerated workers state, the Yugoslav revolution was clearly an indigenous social revolution which, without the intervention of the working class or the direction of a Trotskyist party, succeeded in establishing a (deformed) workers state. The Fourth International avoided the theoretical problem by dubbing the revolution "proletarian" and the Titoists "left centrists." (The SWP avoided the question of China by refusing to unambiguously characterize the Maoist regime as a deformed workers state until 1955. As late as 1954 two articles by the Phillips tendency, characterizing China as state capitalist, were published in the SWP's Fourth International.)

Again orthodoxy is maintained but robbed of its content. The impulse, resisted until Pablo was to give it consistent expression, was that the ability of non-proletarian, non-Trotskyist forces to accomplish any form of social overturn robbed the Fourth International of its reason for existence. The crucial qualitative distinction between a workers state and a deformed workers state—demarcated in blood in the need for political revolution to open the road to socialist development and the extension of the revolution abroad—had been lost.

IV. PABLOISM CONQUERS

The numerically weak, socially isolated, theoretically unarmed and inexperienced cadres of the post-war Fourth International were easy prey for disorientation and impatience in a situation of repeated pre-revolutionary upsurges whose course they could not influence. Beginning in early 1951 a new revisionism, Pabloism, began to assert itself, responding to the frustrating objective situation by posing an ersatz way out of the isolation of the Fourth International from the main motion of the working class. Pabloism was the generalization of this impulse in a revisionist body of theory offering impressionistic answers which were more consistent than the one-sided orthodoxy of the early post-war Fourth International.

It is crucial that the organizational weakness, lack of deep roots in the proletariat and theoretical incapacity and disorientation which were the precondition for the revisionist degeneration of the Fourth International not be simply equated with the consolidation and victory of that revisionism. Despite grave political errors, the Fourth International in the immediate post-war period was still revolutionary. The SWP and the International clung to sterile orthodoxy as a talisman to ward off non-revolutionary conclusions from

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world events which they could no longer comprehend. History had demonstrated that at crucial junctures revolutionary Marxists have been able to transcend an inadequate theory: Lenin before April 1917 was theoretically unequipped to project a proletarian revolution in a backward country like Russia; Trotsky until 1933 had equated the Russian Thermidor with a return to capitalism. Pabloism was more than a symmetrical false theory, more than simply an impressionistic over-reaction against orthodoxy; it was a theoretical justification for a non-revolutionary impulse based on giving up a perspective for the construction of a proletarian vanguard in the advanced or the colonial countries.

In January 1951 Pablo ventured into the realm of theory with a document called "Where Are We Going?" Despite whole paragraphs of confused crackpotism and virtually meaningless bombast, the whole revisionist structure emerges:

"The relation of forces on the international chess-board is now evolving to the disadvantage of imperialism.

"An epoch of transition between capitalism and socialism, an epoch which has already begun and is quite advanced. . . . This transformation will probably take an entire period of several centuries and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from 'pure' forms and norms.

"The objective process is in the final analysis the sole determining factor, overriding all obstacles of a subjective order.

"The Communist Parties retain the possibility in certain circumstances of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation."

Pablo's elevation of the "objective process" to "the sole determining factor" reducing the subjective factor (the consciousness and organization of the vanguard party) to irrelevance, the discussion of "several centuries" of "transition" (later characterized by Pablo's opponents as "centuries of deformed workers states") and the suggestion that revolutionary leadership might be provided by the Stalinist parties rather than the Fourth International—the whole analytic structure of Pabloist revisionism emerged.

In another document, "The Coming War," Pablo put forward his policy of "entrism *sui generis*" (entrism of its own kind):

"In order to integrate ourselves into the real mass movement, to work and to remain in the masses' trade unions for example, 'ruses' and 'capitulations' are not only acceptable but necessary."

In essence, the Trotskyists were to abandon the perspective of short-term entrism whose purpose had always been to split the working-class organizations on a hard programmatic basis as a tactic for building the Trotskyist party. The new entrism policy flowed directly from Pablo's analysis. Since the asserted shift in the world relationship of forces in favor of the advance of the revolution would compel the Stalinist parties to play a revolutionary role, it was only logical that the Trotskyists should be a part of such parties pursuing essentially a policy of pressuring the Stalinist apparatus.

All this should have exploded a bomb in the heads of the

international Trotskyist cadres. Pablo was after all the head of the International Secretariat, the resident political body of the Fourth International! But there is little evidence of even alarm, let alone the formation of the international anti-revisionist faction which was required. One long document by Ernest Germain ("Ten Theses"), and perhaps some subterranean rumbling, did force Pablo to produce an attempt at orthodoxy on the question of the "transitional period" but no other literary notice was taken of Pablo's most overt assault against the program of Trotskyism.

Germain Resists

In March 1951 Germain produced "Ten Theses," which was a veiled attack on "Where Are We Going?" but did not attack Pablo or the document by name. Germain restated the Marxist use of "transitional period" as the period between the victory of the revolution (the dictatorship of the proletariat) and the achievement of socialism (the classless society). Without any explicit reference to Pablo's position, he wrote: "No more than the bourgeoisie will it [Stalinism] survive a war which will be transformed into a world upsurge of the revolution." Germain insisted on the contradictory Bonapartist character of Stalinism, based on proletarian property forms while safeguarding the privileged position of the bureaucracy against the workers. He emphasized the dual nature of the mass CPs outside the USSR as determined by their proletarian base on the one hand and their subservience to the Stalinist bureaucracies in power on the other.

Germain attempted to present the orthodox response to the Pabloist impulse that the destruction of capitalism in Eastern Europe, China and Yugoslavia without a Trotskyist leadership made the Fourth International superfluous. Again, he did not refer to the positions he was attacking; one would have thought that the "Ten Theses" simply dropped from the sky as an interesting theoretical exercise, rather than in response to the emergence of a revisionist current completely counterposed to Germain's thrust. Insisting that a new worldwide revolutionary upsurge would not stabilize Stalinism but rather was a mortal danger to it, he wrote:

"It is because the new revolutionary wave contains in embryo the destruction of the Stalinist parties as such that we ought to be much closer today to the Communist workers. This is only one phase of our fundamental task: to construct new revolutionary parties. . . ." [our emphasis]

"To be 'closer to the Stalinist workers' then signifies at the same time to affirm more than ever our own program and our own Trotskyist policy."

The "Ten Theses" showed that all wings of the Trotskyist movement were still incapable of grasping the nature of the social transformations which had occurred in Eastern Europe (although the analysis of the British Haston-Grant RCP majority, borrowed by the SWP's Los Angeles Vern-Ryan grouping, achieved the beginning (but only the beginning) of wisdom in recognizing that in the immediate post-war period an examination of native property forms would hardly suffice since the state power in Eastern Europe was a foreign occupying army, the Red Army). In 1951 Germain still considered the process of "structural assimilation" uncompleted (!) and predicted the assimilation of the armies of the East European states into the Soviet army—i.e., that Eastern Europe would simply be incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Germain did recognize that the transformation in Eastern Europe destroyed capitalism but contained within it, even in victory, a decisive bureaucratic obstacle to socialist development; he stressed that the expansion of the USSR's non-capitalist mode of production "is infinitely less important than the destruction of the living workers' movement which has preceded it."

No such inbuilt obstacle was recognized with regard to China and, especially, Yugoslavia. The Trotskyists were unable to disassociate the phenomenon of Stalinism from the person of Stalin; the Titoists' break from the Kremlin obscured any recognition that Yugoslavia would necessarily pursue qualitatively identical domestic and diplomatic policies in safeguarding the interest of its own national bureaucratic regime against the working class. Uneasy about admitting that Stalinist forces heading peasant masses could ever consummate an anti-capitalist revolution, Germain in "Ten Theses" termed both the Yugoslav and Chinese events proletarian revolutions and also argued that "under such conditions, these parties cease being Stalinist parties in the classical sense of the term."

Whereas Pablo took these events as the new revolutionary model which invalidated "pure" forms and norms" (i.e., the Russian Revolution) Germain—again without referring to Pablo—stressed that they were as a result of exceptional circumstances which in any case would not be relevant to advanced industrial countries. He contrasted "the de facto United Front which today exists between the colonial revolutions in Asia and the Soviet bureaucracy, which has its objective origin in their being both menaced by imperialism..." with the possibilities for Europe. He concurred in the prediction of an imminent World War III between "the united imperialist front on the one hand and the USSR, the buffer countries and the colonial revolutions on the other" but rather than hailing it, termed it a counter-revolutionary war.

The crux of Germain's argument was:

"What matters above all in the present period is to give the proletariat an international leadership capable of coordinating its forces and proceeding to the world victory of communism. The Stalinist bureaucracy, forced to turn with a blind fury against the first victorious proletarian revolution outside the USSR [Yugoslavia!], is socially incapable of accomplishing any such task. Herein lies the historical mission of our movement.... The historical justification for our movement... resides in the incapacity of Stalinism to overturn world capitalism, an incapacity rooted in the social nature of the Soviet bureaucracy."

With the advantage of hindsight and the experience of the past 20 years—the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism reaffirmed most clearly in Hungary in 1956; the 1960 Cuban revolution in which petty-bourgeois nationalism at the head of peasant guerrillas uprooted capitalism only to merge with the Stalinist apparatus internally and internationally; the consistently nationalist and Stalinist policies of the Chinese CP in power—it is easy to recognize that "Ten Theses" is flawed in its analysis and predictions. What is much more important, however, is the document's consistent and deliberate non-factional tone which presaged Germain's refusal to place himself in the anti-Pabloist camp. Divorced from the determination to fight for a correct line in the

Fourth International, Germain's theoretical defense of the necessity of Trotskyism meant very little. This was Pabloism merely at one remove, the denial of the subjective factor in the revolutionary process.

Third World Congress

The Third World Congress of the Fourth International was held in August-September 1951. The main political report attempted to distinguish between the Communist Parties and "reformist parties" on the grounds that only the former were contradictory, and projected that under the pressure of a strong mass upsurge the CPs could become revolutionary parties. The opportunist nature of Pablo's version of an entrism tactic was sharply revealed in the repudiation of the principled entrism goal of sharp polarization and split: "The possibilities of important splits in the CPs... are replaced by a leftward movement within the CPs among its rank and file." There was no recognition of decisive deformations in the East European and Chinese workers states; thus implicitly the Congress posed only a quantitative difference between the Soviet Union of Lenin and the degenerated and deformed workers states. The report projected the possibility that Tito might "head a regroupment of revolutionary forces independent of capitalism and of the Kremlin... playing a major role in the formation of a new revolutionary leadership." There was no mention of the perspective of permanent revolution for the colonial countries.

The application of Pablo's policy of "entrism sui generis" was elaborated in the Austrian Commission:

"The activity of our members in the SP will be governed by the following directives: A. Not to come forward as Trotskyists with our full program. B. Not to push forward programmatic and principled questions...."

No quantity of verbal orthodoxy in resolutions could have any longer obscured the vision of those who wanted to see.

The Parti Communiste Internationaliste of France submitted Germain's "Ten Theses" for a vote (after Germain himself had apparently backed out of doing so) and proposed amendments to the main document. No vote was taken on the "Ten Theses" or the French amendments. The PCI voted against adopting the thrust of the main document; it was the only section to do so.

In the months that followed, the Pabloist line was elaborated along the lines already made clear before and at the Third World Congress:

"We are entering [the Stalinist parties] in order to remain there for a long time banking on the great possibility of seeing these parties, placed under new conditions ["a generally irreversible pre-revolutionary period"], develop centrist tendencies which will lead a whole stage of the radicalization of the masses and of the objective revolutionary processes...."

(Pablo, Report to the 10th Plenum of the International Executive Committee, February 1952)

"Caught between the imperialist threat and the colonial revolution, the Soviet bureaucracy found itself obliged to ally with the second against the first.... The disintegration of Stalinism within these parties ought not to be understood... as an organizational disintegration... or a

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public break with the Kremlin but as a progressive internal transformation."

("The Rise and Decline of Stalinism," International Secretariat, September 1953)

V. THE ANTI-PABLOISTS

With the capitulation of Germain, whose role in the preliminary conflicts over Pabloist policies is ambiguous but in whom the French appear to have placed some degree of confidence, the task of fighting Pabloism fell to the French PCI majority of Bleibtreu-Lambert and the American SWP. Despite a considerable body of mythology to the contrary, both the PCI and SWP vacillated when revisionism manifested itself at the head of the Fourth International, balking only at applying it to their own sections. Both groups compromised themselves by uneasy acquiescence (combined in the case of the PCI with sporadic resistance) to Pablo's policies until the suicidal organizational consequences to their sections necessitated sharp fights. Both abdicated the responsibility to take the fight against revisionism into every body and every section of the Fourth International and both retreated from the struggle by the foundation of the "International Committee" on the basis of "the principles of orthodox Trotskyism." The IC from its inception was only a paper international tendency consisting of those groups which had already had splits between pro-Pabloist and orthodox wings.

PCI Fights Pablo

The PCI majority, having had been placed in receivership by the International Secretariat (which had installed the Pablo-loyal minority led by Mestre and Frank as the leadership of the French section), continued to claim agreement with the line of the Third World Congress, arguing that Pablo and the IS and IEC were violating its decisions! According to the French, Pabloism "utilizes the confusions and contradictions of the World Congress—where it could not impose itself—in order to assert itself after the World Congress." (undated "Declaration of the Bleibtreu-Lambert Tendency on the Agreements Concluded at the IEC," March or April 1952)

An important letter dated 16 February 1952 from Renard on behalf of the PCI majority to Cannon appealed to the SWP. Renard's letter claimed agreement with the Third World Congress, including its French Commission, and contrasted the supposedly non-Pabloist World Congress (citing vague platitudes to demonstrate its presumably orthodox thrust) with Pablo's subsequent actions and line in the IEC and IS. Renard asserted that "Pabloism did not win out at the Third World Congress." (He wisely did not attempt to explain why his organization voted against the main Congress documents!) The main argument of the letter is an appeal against the Pabloist international leadership's intervention into the French national section.

Cannon's reply of 29 May accused the PCI majority of Stalinophobic opportunism in the union movement (a bloc with progressive anti-communists against the CP) and denied the existence of any such thing as Pabloism.

The PCI majority evidenced a clear understanding of the

implications of the Pabloist entrenchment. In a polemic against minority theoretician Mestre the majority had written:

"If these ideas are correct, stop chattering about the tactic of entrenchment, even entrenchment *sui generis*, and pose clearly our new tasks: that of a more consistent tendency, not even a left opposition... whose role is to aid Stalinism to overcome its hesitation and to pose under the best conditions the decisive clash with the bourgeoisie... If Stalinism has changed... [it means that] it no longer reflects the particular interests of a bureaucratic caste whose very existence depends on the unstable equilibrium between classes, that it is no longer bonapartist, but that it reflects solely... the defense of the workers state. That such a transformation should be produced without the intervention of the Soviet proletariat... but on the contrary by an evolution of the bureaucracy itself... would lead us not merely to revise the Transitional Program [but] all the works of Leon Trotsky since 1923 and the foundation of the Fourth International."

("First Reflections of Zig Zag," PCI Internal Bulletin No. 2, February 1952)

But the PCI majority, not unlike the SWP, demonstrated a failure of concrete internationalism when faced with the prospect of all alone carrying through the fight against Pabloism.

On 3 June 1952 the PCI majority asked for recognition of two French sections of the Fourth International, thus permitting the PCI majority to carry out its own policies in France. This was in clear violation of the founding statutes of the Fourth International and meant the liquidation of the International as a disciplined world body. What was required as an international faction fight over the political line of the Fourth International. But the PCI majority was unwilling to subordinate work in France to the crucial fight for the legitimacy and continuity of the Fourth International. Pablo's refusal to accede to this demand led directly to the split of the PCI majority.

SWP Enters the Struggle

The SWP only joined the fight against revisionism when a pro-Pabloist tendency, the Clarke wing of the Cochran-Clarke faction, manifested itself within the American party. In his reply to Renard dated 29 May 1952 Cannon had said:

"We do not see ["any kind of pro-Stalinist tendency"] in the international leadership of the Fourth International nor any sign nor symptom of it. We do not see any revisionism [in the documents]... we consider these documents to be completely Trotskyist... It is the unanimous opinion of the leading people in the SWP that the authors of these documents have rendered a great service to the movement."

The story that the SWP had prepared some amendments to the Third World Congress documents which Clarke (SWP representative to the International) had burned instead of presenting is quite possibly true but not very significant, in view of Cannon's declaration of political allegiance to Pablo when it counted, in refusing to solidarize with the anti-Pabloist PCI majority.

Against Cochran-Clarke's advocacy of an orientation toward the CP fellow-travellers, the SWP majority affirmed support to the Pabloist CP entrenchment tactic in general but insisted on a kind of American exceptionalism, contrasting the mass European parties with the pathetic American CP milieu, lacking a working-class base and peopled with shoddy

third-rate intellectuals.

In response to the Cochran-Clarke threat, Cannon set about forming a faction in the SWP aided by the Weiss leadership in Los Angeles. Cannon sought to line up the old party cadre around the question of conciliation to Stalinism and appealed to the party trade unionists like Dunne and Swabeck by drawing an analogy between the need for factional struggle within the party and the struggle within the class against the reformists and sellouts as parallel processes of factional struggle against alien ideology. He told the May 1953 SWP Plenum:

"During the course of the past year, I had serious doubts of the ability of the SWP to survive. . . . I thought that our 25 year effort . . . had ended in catastrophic failure, and that, once again, a small handful would have to pick up the pieces and start all over again to build the new cadre of another party on the old foundations."

(Closing speech, 30 May)

But Cannon chose another road. Instead of pursuing the necessary struggle wherever it might lead, Cannon made a bloc with the Dobbs-Kerry-Hansen apparatus over the organizationally liquidationist implications of the Cochran-Clarke line. In return for their support Cannon promised the routinist, conservative Dobbs administration total control of the SWP with no further interference from him ("a new regime in the party").

The SWP's response to finding the dispute in the International reflecting itself inside the American section was to deepen its isolationism into virulent anti-internationalism. Cannon's speech to the SWP majority caucus on 18 May 1953 stated, "We don't consider ourselves an American branch office of an international business firm that receives orders from the boss" and extolled discussion in which "we work out, if possible [!], a common line." Cannon denied the legitimacy of an international leadership and referred to "a few people in Paris." He contrasted the Fourth International with Lenin's Comintern, which had state power and a leadership whose authority was widely recognized, and thus denied that the contemporary Fourth International could be a democratic centralist body.

Cannon belatedly took exception to Pablo's conduct against the French majority, but only over the organizational question in keeping with the proposition that the International leadership should not intervene in the affairs of national sections. He wrote:

"... we were flabbergasted at the tactics used in the recent French conflict and split, and at the inconceivable organizational precedent established there. That is why I delayed my answer to Renard so long. I wanted to help the IS politically, but I didn't see how I could sanction the organizational steps taken against the majority of an elected leadership. I finally resolved the problem by just ignoring that part of Renard's letter."

("Letter to Tom," 4 June 1953)

The "Letter to Tom" also reiterated the position that the Third World Congress was not revisionist.

The crucial defects in the anti-Pabloist struggle of the PCI and SWP were duly utilized by the Pabloists. The 14th IEC Plenum took Cannon to task for his concept of the

International as a "federative union." It noted that the SWP had never opposed the Pabloist entrism policy in principle and accused the SWP-PCI of an unprincipled bloc on China. Seizing on the SWP's one-sided orthodoxy (Hansen's defense of an SWP majorityite's formulation that Stalinism is "counterrevolutionary through and through"—a characterization which fits only the CIA!) the Pabloists were able to cloak their liquidation of an independent Trotskyist program with pious reaffirmations of the contradictions of Stalinism as a counterrevolutionary caste resting atop the property forms established by the October Revolution.

IC Formed

Following the Cochran-Clarke split, the SWP precipitously broke publicly with Pablo. On 16 November 1953 *The Militant* carried "A Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World" which denounced Cochran-Clarke and Pablo and belatedly solidarized with the "unjustly expelled" PCI majority. The SWP's previous characterizations of the Third World Congress as "completely Trotskyist" necessitated an attempt in this so-called "Open Letter" to locate the emergency of Pabloism after the Congress, which doomed the SWP to present a somewhat unconvincing case leaning heavily on a leaflet or two of the Pabloist French minority from 1952. At about the same time the SWP produced "Against Pabloite Revisionism" dated November 1953, which contained a more competent analysis of Pablo's liquidationist accommodation to Stalinism:

"The conception that a mass Communist Party will take the road to power if only sufficient mass pressure is brought to bear is false. It shifts the responsibility for revolutionary setbacks from the leadership to the mass . . ."

"The working class is transformed [by Pablo's theories] into a pressure group, and the Trotskyists into a pressure grouping along with it which pushes a section of the bureaucracy toward the revolution. In this way, the bureaucracy is transformed from a block and a betrayer of the revolution into an auxiliary motor force of it."

In 1954 the "International Committee" was formed. It included the French PCI majority, the American SWP (fraternal) and the Healy (Burns) grouping in England. The latter did not play any significant or independent role in the fight against revisionism. The Healy-Lawrence split from the disintegrating Revolutionary Communist Party after the war, impelled by the Healy-Lawrence faction's deep entrism perspective toward the British Labour Party, had been backed by Pablo's International Secretariat, which recognized two sections in Britain and gave them equal representation on the IEC. Healy was Cannon's "man" in England and had been consistently supported by the SWP in disputes within the RCP. When the SWP broke from Pablo, the Healy-Lawrence faction split, Healy aligning with the SWP and Lawrence with Pablo (Lawrence later went over to Stalinism as did the PCI minority's Mestre). Despite being part of the new anti-Pabloist international bloc, the Healy group continued its arch-Pabloist Labour Party opportunism. It had no

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weight in the IC bloc until its recruitment of an impressive layer of CP intellectuals and trade unionists (most of whom it later lost) following the 1956 Hungarian Revolution made it considerably more substantial in the British left.

The IC also claimed the adherence of the Chinese (emigre) section, which had already undergone a split, and the small Swiss section.

The IC managed to produce a couple of internal bulletins in early 1954 but never met as a real international body, nor was a centralized leadership ever elected. The tactic adopted by the SWP was to boycott the Fourth World Congress, as merely a meeting of Pablo's faction having no legitimacy as the Fourth International.

The world movement paid a high price for this evasion. To cite only one example: Ceylon. The Ceylonese LSSP took a non-factional position on Pabloism, appealing to the SWP not to split and to attend the Fourth Congress. A hard fight should have been aggressively pushed toward the passive Ceylonese doubters, forcing a polarization and forging a hard cadre in the struggle. Instead the Ceylonese drifted along with Pablo. Some seven years later, the revolutionary reputation of Trotskyism was besmirched in the eyes of militants throughout the world by the LSSP's entry into the bourgeois Ceylonese coalition government, precipitating a last-minute split by the international Pabloist leadership. Had a hard principled anti-revisionist fight been waged in the Ceylon section in 1953, a hard revolutionary organization with an independent claim to Trotskyist continuity might have been created then, preventing the association of the name of Trotskyism with the fundamental betrayal of the LSSP.

Thus the anti-revisionist fight was deliberately not carried to the world movement, the IC consisting mainly of those groups which had already had their splits over the application of Pabloist policies in their own countries, and the struggle to defeat revisionism and reconstruct the Fourth International on the basis of authentic Trotskyism was aborted.

From Flirtation to Consummation

In 1957 Pablo's International Secretariat and the SWP flirted with possible reunification (the Hansen-Kolpe correspondence). The basis at that time was formal orthodoxy—the similarity of line between the IS and SWP in response to the 1956 Hungarian revolution. The SWP, perhaps naively expecting a repetition of Clarke's 1953 position on the possibility of self-liquidation of the Stalinist bureaucracies, tended to accept the IS's formally Trotskyist conclusions over Hungary as good coin. These early reunification overtures came to naught because of the opposition of the British and French IC groups, as well as Cannon's suspicions that Pablo was maneuvering. The issue was posed in a defective way—simply apparent empirical agreement without an examination of past differences and present motion.

When the question of reunification, consummated in 1963 with the formation of the United Secretariat, came up again, the entire political terrain had shifted. The IS and the

SWP found themselves in agreement over Cuba. But the basis was no longer an apparent convergence on orthodoxy, but the SWP's abandonment of Trotskyism to embrace Pabloist revisionism (which the SWP in its class-collaborationist line on the Vietnamese war has now transcended on the path to outright reformism).

The basis for the 1963 reunification was a document titled "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement—Statement by the Political Committee of the SWP," 1 March 1963. The key new line was section 13:

"Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

In "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 12 June 1963, the Spartacist tendency counterposed:

"Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the proletarian leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries.' Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerilla road to socialism—historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought. This alternative would be a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for the adventurers."

Ironically, the SWP's further rightist evolution leads it to now repudiate the basic line of section 13, from the other side—the U.Sec.'s advocacy of petty-bourgeois armed struggle is far too adventurous for the legalistic SWP which aims to become the mass party of American reformism.

Spartacist and the Fourth International

In his struggle to found the Fourth International, Trotsky repeatedly underscored the imperative need for revolutionary organization on an international basis. Prolonged national isolation within one country must ultimately disorient, deform and destroy any revolutionary grouping no matter how subjectively steadfast. Only a principled and disciplined international collaboration can provide a counterbalance to the fierce pressures toward insularity and social chauvinism

generated by the bourgeoisie and its ideological agents within the working-class movement. As Trotsky recognized, those who deny the need for a programmatically founded democratic centralist world party deny the Leninist concept of the vanguard party itself. The destruction of the Fourth International by Pabloist revisionism, paralleled by organizational fracturing into numerous competing international blocs, necessitates the unremitting struggle for its rebirth.

In our ten year history, the Spartacist tendency has faced and resisted powerful objective pressures toward abandonment of an internationalist perspective. Cut off from the possibility of disciplined international ties as a result of the organizational sectarianism and subsequent political degeneration of Gerry Healy's International Committee, the Spartacist League has refused to passively acquiesce to the national isolation forced upon us. We have emphatically rejected the ersatz "internationalism" which achieves its international connections at the price of a federalist non-aggression pact thus renouncing in advance the struggle for disciplined international organization. We have sought to develop fraternal ties with groupings in other countries as part of a process of clarification and polarization. Our aim is the crystallization of a cohesive democratic centralist international tendency based on principled programmatic unity, the

embryo of a reborn Fourth International.

The current cracking of the several international "Trotskyist" blocs now provides heightened opportunity for the Spartacist tendency to intervene in the world movement. Our history and program can serve as a guide for currents now in motion towards authentic Trotskyism, because despite involuntary national isolation for a time, we upheld our internationalist determination and continued to wage a principled fight against revisionism.

The shattering of the revisionists' and centrists' pretensions to international organization—the revelation that the United Secretariat, the International Committee, etc. have been nothing more than federated rotten blocs—combined with the worldwide renewal of proletarian combativeness in a context of sharpened inter-imperialist rivalry and intensified deep-seated capitalist crisis, provide an unprecedented objective opportunity for the crystallization and development of the Spartacist tendency internationally. As the political corpses of the revisionist blocs continue to decay, the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, must be reborn.

FOR THE REBIRTH OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

...SWP

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there is led by the Leninist party. While the party press gives lip service to [criticizing] the criminal attitude of the Chinese and Soviet workers' states toward the Vietnamese Revolution, we maintain that Stalinism is still the major obstacle in the workers movement to the international socialist revolution and must be thoroughly exposed and fought against at every step.

In trying to defend the Revolution against imperialism, the party blocs with one wing of U.S. imperialism in NPAC. The betrayals of such a course are precisely the betrayals that arose in the classical Popular Front. While the party should attend antiwar conferences and marches, it should fight to unite the working class around the banner of Leninism. It should have a position of revolutionary defeatism by making a clear, unambiguous call for the military victory of the DRVN, and NLF. It should take no organizational responsibility for NPAC and should oppose the idealistic single-issuism and class collaboration that characterize it.

7. An integral part of the party's flight from a revolutionary working class program has been its flight from the working class itself. The party's line dictates a primary and almost exclusive orientation to the petty bourgeoisie, which is reflected in the party's overwhelmingly petty bourgeois composition. These two interacting factors, program and composition, lead the party directly away from revolutionary Marxism. We continue to call for a proletarian orientation, as outlined in **For a Proletarian Orientation**. However, we believe that the most important thing is not simply orienting to and becoming rooted in the working class, but doing that **with the correct program**. The party's energies must be pri-

marily oriented to the working class and to building a Leninist party thoroughly proletarian in composition.

8. The current program of the SWP is sharply counterposed to the revolutionary heritage of the party and to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We announce the formation of the Leninist Faction of the SWP which shall fight to win the majority of the party to its program.

The Leninist Faction

15 May 1972

Marxist Bulletin No. 10

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The Case of Bala Tampoe

We are bringing to the attention of the international working-class movement the "case" of Bala Tampoe, head of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary), Ceylon section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International." The Tampoe scandal is much more than the revelation of clear-cut anti-revolutionary conduct on the part of an individual U.Sec. leader. It is a record of deliberate, deep and long-standing complicity on the part of the U.Sec., which had continued to pass off as a "revolutionary" an individual compromised by the most shameless violations of elementary communist morality. The conduct of the wretched Tampoe is in and of itself a scandal of enormous dimensions. But the Tampoe "case" is crucial in that it unambiguously reveals on the part of the U.Sec. the most profound political corruption.

The "case" of Bala Tampoe was raised at the U.Sec.'s "World Congress" in April 1969, at the insistence of Edmund Samarakkody, a member of the International Executive Committee whose group had split from Tampoe's LSSP(R) the previous year. As detailed in the letter from Samarakkody reprinted below, a Commission on Ceylon was established, which met with Samarakkody and Tampoe. Two reports were submitted from the Commission, a report of the Commission itself and a separate report from its Indian member, a senior leader of the Indian U.Sec. group who served as chairman of the Commission.

The Commission on Ceylon was faced with the question of what to do about Tampoe in the face of uncontested facts: Tampoe's acceptance of a trip to the United States in 1967 financed by the Asia Foundation, a well-known recipient of CIA funds, during which Tampoe had a private interview in Washington with McNamara, then U.S. Secretary of

Defense; Tampoe's attendance at small social gatherings of imperialist diplomats, including a private reception for ex-Nazi Kiesinger of West Germany; Tampoe's conduct as the bureaucratic head of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, a large union of rather conservative white-collar workers; the policies of the LSSP(R) particularly in situations relating to union policy. With reference to the latter, the Commission report made a sweeping denunciation of the LSSP(R), couched in mild language: "... in none of these instances is there any evidence that the party took what the Commission considered a policy consistent with revolutionary Marxism," or as the Indian delegate's report put it, "the role of the LSSP(R) during some of the recent strikes in Ceylon ... has been such as to place the party in the camp of the enemy as opposed to workers in action."

Any one of these incidents would have been sufficient to compel a revolutionary working-class organization to immediately and publicly expel Tampoe as a traitor and an enemy. But of course the U.Sec. is not a revolutionary working-class organization. Having been compelled to constitute a Commission on Ceylon, the U.Sec. then suppressed the entire matter: in the minutes of the "World Congress" there appeared not a single reference to the scandalous facts which were the basis for the investigation! Reprinted below from the "World Congress" minutes are all the sections which deal with the Commission on Ceylon; they give no hint of the nature of the uncontested accusations against Tampoe.

What about the one operative recommendation of the Commission—that Tampoe's dual role as head of the LSSP(R) and of the Ceylon Mercantile Union be terminated "as soon as possible"? The full reports of the Commission and the Indian delegate demonstrate that were Tampoe forced to choose between control of the 30,000-member CMU and the 50-member "party"—whose policies show that it is self-evidently nothing other than an appendage of Tampoe's CMU bureaucracy—there can be little doubt he would choose the CMU. And three years later, the 3 July 1972 issue of the SWP's *Intercontinental Press*, in reprinting a resolution of the General Council of the CMU, referred to "Bala Tampoe, general secretary of the union and secretary of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Revolutionary), the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International."

So much for the Commission. In fact, the outcome of the Tampoe "case" was never in doubt, recommendations for further investigations to the contrary. For the "World Congress" made its position unambiguously clear when it unanimously elected Tampoe to the incoming IEC. Thus the U.Sec., whose adherents pride themselves on their calls for "Victory to the NLF," included on its leading political body a man who admittedly has private discussions with U.S. imperialism's War Minister!

Some Background

The Trotskyist movement in Ceylon developed essentially after Trotsky's death, but achieved effective hegemony in the urban working class. The Lanka Sama Samaja Party, founded in 1935, remained insulated from the Trotskyism/Stalinism

split in world Communism until the outbreak of World War II, when the urgent question of the Comintern's line toward the war propelled a split in the LSSP. The forces who identified with Trotskyism gained the majority and shortly thereafter expelled the Stalinists. During the war the LSSP was illegalized and most of its leadership arrested. In the general strikes that broke out in the early post-war period, the LSSP consolidated its substantial mass base among the Sinhalese working class in the cities, but never attained any real rooting in the doubly oppressed Tamil plantation proletariat. In the Parliament issuing out of the 1947 elections, the LSSP was the main Opposition to the bourgeois United National Party. The LSSP provided the leadership for the massive general strike of 1952 against the UNP government.

In 1951 Bandaranaike had led a split from the UNP to form the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (now led by his widow). In its class roots and program the SLFP was no different than the UNP from which it had issued. After the 1952 elections, where the UNP won a substantial majority, the SLFP became the main Parliamentary Opposition. In the period leading up to the 1956 elections, the SLFP made its move. Consolidating an electoral bloc with a group which had split from the LSSP in 1953, the SLFP launched a formidable agitation campaign centered around a policy of

tion" with the new bourgeois government, but was compelled into a more oppositional stance. Widespread rioting which broke out in 1958 was followed by the imposition of a state of emergency lasting several months. Outbreaks of strikes continued sporadically for several years, in which the LSSP played a considerable role due to its leadership of key unions including the Government Workers Trade Union Federation.

In the March 1960 elections, the LSSP initially stood for election in its own name. When the SLFP government lost a motion of confidence, forcing new elections, the LSSP entered into a no-contest and mutual support pact with the SLFP. An SLFP government was installed under Mrs. Bandaranaike. In the ensuing Parliament the LSSP defined itself as neither part of the government nor of the Opposition.

In 1964 the LSSP entered the Bandaranaike government composed of the SLFP-LSSP-CP and was suddenly and speedily expelled by the United Secretariat. The LSSP(R), the current "Ceylon section" of the U.Sec., was formed at that time.

The importance of Ceylon is the struggle to win over the Ceylonese proletariat—and especially the Tamil plantation workers—as a staging area for proletarian revolution on the Indian subcontinent as a whole. The LSSP's adaptation to the bourgeois SLFP, which culminated in the entry into the Bandaranaike government in 1964, was a degeneration begun years before and ignored by the Pabloists, the SWP and the Healyites (see WV No. 3). The capitulation to the SLFP was rooted at least in part in the LSSP's historic failure to base itself among the Tamil rural proletariat, finding roots almost exclusively in the relatively privileged unionized Sinhalese workers, leading to accommodation when the SLFP's appeal to anti-Tamil chauvinism among Sinhalese workers threatened the LSSP's mass base.

After the "Ninth World Congress"

In the spring of 1971 a mass uprising of peasant and student youth took place in Ceylon. The uprising was led by the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna, or People's Liberation Front, which had been organizing clandestinely since 1966. The JVP forces had initially helped to install the SLFP-LSSP-CP government. In 1971, operating under youth-vanguardist and peasant-vanguardist conceptions, the JVP launched an uprising. They relied on their own forces, without having politically prepared and mobilized any section of the broad masses, neither the working class nor the peasantry. The JVP had no position on the burning question of the rights of the oppressed Tamil minority in Ceylon. The rebel youth demonstrated tremendous combativity and courage but no section of the masses rose in support of the youth, who were brutally crushed. The Bandaranaike government's pretensions to "socialist democracy" and "anti-imperialism" did not of course interfere with its bloody repression of the youth uprising. In the undertaking the government received military aid from Britain, the U.S., the Soviet Union, India, Pakistan, Egypt and elsewhere, and economic aid and explicit political solidarity from China. Thus all interested, counterposed

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"Sinhala Only," aimed against the pro-English language policy of the UNP but mainly against the Tamil minority, whipping up and capitalizing on virulent anti-Tamil chauvinism. The LSSP maintained its programmatic plank in favor of both Sinhala and Tamil being official languages, but defined the defeat of the UNP as the main task, making a no-contest electoral agreement with the bourgeois SLFP bloc—a policy which the LSSP had sought since 1951.

After the 1956 elections the SLFP bloc became the government. The LSSP led the Opposition in Parliament. It began by defining its attitude as one of "responsive coopera-

(Continued next page)

... Tampoe

power blocs of imperialists, Stalinists and nationalists competed in aiding the Ceylonese government in crushing the domestic uprising. Thousands of youth were massacred and thousands more arrested.

The line of the United Secretariat was, predictably, to politically solidarize with the JVP without any criticism of its Sinhalese chauvinism, its adventurist substitution of armed struggle for political preparation of the working masses, its denial of the uniquely leading role of the proletariat in socialist revolution. This uncritical Pabloist tailing of qualitatively politically defective elements is classic centrism.

This was, however, not the policy of the U.Sec.'s own section in Ceylon. Tampoe is nothing but a social chauvinist and cynical reformist union bureaucrat. Tampoe's real role caused no alarm in the U.Sec.—it had after all been clearly demonstrated two years before at the 1969 "World Congress." The U.Sec. simply manufactured a fairy tale about the role of Tampoe and the LSSP(R) in the youth uprising.

The U.Sec. line was presented in a statement of the U.Sec. printed in *Intercontinental Press*, 19 April 1971. The claim is that the JVP and the LSSP(R) were participants in a "single revolutionary front" leading the uprising. The same line was repeated in an article in the British New *Left Review*, from which several people have recently gone over to the U.Sec. (The article was later reprinted in *PL* magazine, of all places. This puts PL in the unenviable position of politically and physically attacking all "Trotskyites"—except one—the one who took money from the Asia Foundation.)

The problem with the "single revolutionary front" is really quite simple. It is a lie from start to finish. The JVP was brutally suppressed, and thousands of its members and suspected members were indiscriminately killed or arrested. For weeks the bodies of young people killed by the armed forces floated in the rivers of Ceylon. It is a fact that not one member of the LSSP(R) was taken into police custody at that time even accidentally—surely inexplicable favoritism on the part of the bourgeois state toward an organization which the U.Sec. claims was equally the vanguard of the uprising!

Tampoe and the Youth Uprising

In September 1971 one Lord Avebury of "Amnesty International" was expelled from Ceylon after attempting to enter a youth detention camp. A government communique identified Bala Tampoe as one of the individuals who had accompanied Avebury. It further stated: "Lord Avebury was in close contact with several persons who appeared to be anxious to embarrass and discredit the government and to smear the image of Ceylon, in this island and abroad." To disassociate himself from the terrible charge of wanting to discredit the government—which had just brutally butchered thousands of young insurgents—Tampoe rushed off an indignant letter: "... the insinuation ... is not only false but obviously malicious. Never in my life have I said or done anything to smear the image of Ceylon in this island or abroad."

A letter from Tampoe to the Prime Minister dated 30 April 1971 hardly befits a leader in a "single revolutionary front" discussing the massive execution of the JVP. Unwilling to take responsibility for even the mildest protest, Tampoe hid behind LSSP Cabinet Minister Leslie Goonewardena: "Mr. Leslie Goonewardena himself seems to believe that 'excesses' have been committed by the armed services since the uprising began . . ." Tampoe cannot even protest the unspeakably brutal JVP suppression without putting the word "excesses" in quotation marks!

In August 1971 a resolution of the General Council of Tampoe's CMU resolved that "the General Council will mobilize the entire membership of the union to make whatever sacrifices that the mass organizations of the people may consider necessary" if the bourgeois government will undertake measures "to break Ceylon free of the stranglehold of Imperialism upon it, and thereby to enable the people to set about the establishment of a genuine socialist democracy in Ceylon." To call upon a capitalist regime—and one which has just demonstrated its viciously reactionary nature in blood—to build socialism, to urge the working class to make "sacrifices" in the interests of such a government, is this the line of the United Secretariat? We confidently expect that at least some elements in the U.Sec. will profess themselves very shocked about Tampoe's conduct, pleading innocence of the information. Yet the *Intercontinental Press* statement quoted earlier as identifying Tampoe as head of the LSSP(R) and the CMU is an introduction to a declaration of the very same CMU General Council. The United Secretariat's selective memory when it comes to Bala Tampoe is quite deliberate. It is the application in practice of the Pabloist revisionism that is built into the foundations of the United Secretariat. Thus that "United Secretariat," its "fraternal" SWP included, is led, purely and simply, to perpetuate a fraud and a crime against the international working class.

Revolutionary Samasamaja Party
(Fourth Internationalist)
5C, Galle Road, Dehiwala
[Ceylon]

26 May 1972

Dear Comrade Gordon,

I received your letter of 12 May 1972.

Regarding your inquiry on the authenticity of the two typewritten documents entitled "Report of the Commission on Ceylon of the Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International" and "[Indian delegate's] Report—Ceylon Question" both of which I handed to Comrade Bill L. when he was recently in Ceylon, I may inform you as follows:

I attended the Ninth World Congress of the Fourth International (United Secretariat) held in Europe from 11 to 19 April 1969 as a member of the International Executive Committee elected at the Eighth Congress in 1965. At this Congress (Ninth Congress) a Commission was appointed to inquire into the circumstances leading to, and the politics of the split in the LSSP(R) in 1968 and the request of the RSP

that it be recognized as the Ceylon section of the Fourth International. The Commission consisted of the following: [two delegates from North America, one from Switzerland, a senior delegate each from China and India, and a delegate from Japan designated who, however, was not present].

[The Indian delegate] left the Congress on the 17th. Before leaving [the Indian delegate] handed me a copy of his report which he stated was a minority report and which he left with the Commission. I returned his report to [the Indian delegate] after taking a true copy of it. I informed [the Indian delegate] that I had taken a copy of it.

On 19 April, two days after, the Ceylon question came up for consideration before the Congress. The report of the Commission was read out in open Congress by a member of the Commission and translated simultaneously to other languages. Copies of the report were handed to Tampoe and me. I raised with the Commission the question of the minority report of [the Indian delegate] a copy of which I said was with me. I displayed this copy of the [Indian delegate's] report and requested the Commission to table this report. The spokesman for the Commission thereupon admitted that [the Indian delegate] had submitted a report but that it was not a minority report. When my turn for intervention in the Ceylon question came I quoted extensively from the [Indian delegate's] report without being challenged in regard to the accuracy of it.

At the end of the deliberations on the Ceylon question the Praesidium collected the copies of the report of the Commission that were in the hands of the translators and also the copies that had been handed over to me and Tampoe. I however had with me my copies of the Commission report and [the Indian delegate's] report made by me from the originals in that regard when these were handed over to me by [a North American Commission member] and [the Indian delegate] respectively. I am in a position therefore to state that the copies of these two reports that I handed over to Comrade L. are true copies of the Ceylon Commission report and of the [Indian delegate's] report.

You are free to give publicity to these reports. I agree with you that "the scandalous revelations will be a service to the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International."

Yours fraternally,
[signed]
Edmund Samarakkody
Secretary
Revolutionary Samasamaja Party

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON CEYLON

The Commission had to deal with the following matters:—

(a) A request by the RSP led by Comrade Edmund not to allow Comrade Bala to sit in the Congress because as an "agent of the class enemy" he would endanger the world movement. This request was reiterated in the Commission and in front of the Congress charging Bala explicitly with being a "CIA agent."

(b) A written request of the RSP to disaffiliate the LSSP(R) led by Comrade Bala, as the section of the 4th International and to recognize the RSP as the Ceylon section of the 4th International.

(c) A written request by Comrade Karalasingham for his tendency that neither the LSSP(R) nor the RSP be recognized as the Ceylon section of the 4th International by this Congress.

Concerning the charges that Comrade Bala is an agent of the enemy class, on the basis of documents submitted by Comrade Edmund and Bala and after hearing extensively from the two comrades the Commission [found] that the accusation that Comrade Bala is "an agent of the class enemy" or an "agent of the CIA" was totally unsubstantiated by Comrade Edmund. To make such a grave charge was totally irresponsible on the part of Comrade Edmund and should be condemned by the World Congress.

All members of the Commission were able to agree on one point; while the leadership of a large militant union by a comrade of the 4th International might be an important achievement, the close interrelationship between the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU)—a union of 30,000 white collar workers with its own political needs—and a small party of some 50 members a large percentage of whom either belong to the union or hold leadership positions in that union inevitably results in a tendency to subordinate the party line and actions of the party to the needs of the trade union policy. Such a situation is dangerous even if the comrades involved start with the best revolutionary intentions.

It was with this question that the Commission was centrally concerned. The Commission did not feel it was in a position to fully examine the policies of Comrade Bala in his Union. We were concerned only with the possible subordination of party policies to the needs of the union, and the serious problems posed by the dual position of Comrade Bala as secretary of the LSSP(R).

The Commission felt that some of the actions and policies of Comrade Bala and the LSSP(R) brought to our attention by Comrade Edmund and not denied by Comrade Bala could have seriously damaged the reputation of Comrade Bala as a revolutionary leader, compromised the 4th International in Ceylon and [could] have been exploited by all the enemies of our movement. In this context, we refer especially to the following examples:—

(a) A series of incidents which together constitute compromisingly close relations between Comrade Bala and the Ceylonese embassies or missions of the imperialist countries;

(1) A trip to the U.S. in the summer of 1967, financed by the Asia Foundation.

(2) His acceptance of a small private luncheon invitation at the residence of the British High Commissioner, during the 1966 plantation workers strike—a luncheon that was also attended by Thondaman, a trade union leader who was playing an open strikebreaking role against the plantation workers.

(Continued next page)

... Tampoe

(3) His attendance at a small dinner party at the West German Embassy for visiting Chancellor Kiesinger.

(b) A letter sent to the Ceylonese Prime Minister on 22 January 1966 by Comrade Bala in his capacity as union General Secretary, concerning the state of emergency in which he implied support for the imposition of a curfew in response to the "violence" that occurred in Colombo. (This letter is included in bulletin 17 March 1969.)

(c) Comrade Bala's policy in regard to the struggle against devaluation of the rupee in November-December 1967. The CMU did not support the strike that took place at that time in the private sector. Serious questions are raised concerning why the LSSP(R) did not take the lead in fighting for united action by all the trade unions and working-class parties against devaluation.

Again on these charges and in other similar ones we did not attempt to pass judgment on the policies of the CMU, but on the subordination of the policies of the LSSP(R) to the union, as in none of these instances is there any evidence that the party took what the Commission considered a policy consistent with revolutionary Marxism.

The Commission was not unanimous in evaluating all these actions. While all agreed they were, or could be, extremely compromising, some comrades felt they might be explained in the context of Ceylonese political and trade union life; others felt they were totally unjustifiable.

With regard to the appeal of the RSP, headed by Comrade Edmund, to be recognized as the Ceylon section of the 4th International, the Commission clearly established the following facts: (1) that this group while in the LSSP(R) before the split operated as an undeclared faction within the party, (2) that its claim of manipulation of the attendance of the April 1968 LSSP(R) conference is extremely dubious since at this conference both tendencies received the same number of votes as in the conference of June 1967, (3) that while Comrade Edmund's tendency was not granted any minority representation at this 1968 conference, either on the Central Committee or on bodies such as the controlling body of the party press, and that this refusal of representation is contrary to Trotskyist practice, Comrade Edmund's group split one week after this conference, without consulting or even informing the United Secretariat in advance. In previous letters the United Secretariat had clearly stated it was opposed to any splits in the LSSP(R), (4) that upon splitting or forming the RSP, this group quickly issued a declaration to the public not only simply announcing its break, but attacking Comrade Bala, leader of the Ceylon section, openly as an enemy of the working class and in a thinly disguised way as an agent of the CIA. The Ceylon capitalist press featured the full text of this statement gravely accusing Comrade Bala whose union had just ended a large strike. (5) Finally in its press and its letterhead the RSP has fraudulently proclaimed itself as the Ceylon section of the 4th International.

On the basis of the undisputed facts the Commission had this established, and after lengthy and serious consideration,

the Commission unanimously recommends the following conclusions to the World Congress:—

(1) It is the duty of the 4th International to defend Comrade Bala against accusations of the "agent" type. The World Congress should appeal to the RSP to withdraw these slanderous and damaging accusations publicly and in an appropriate manner.

(2) The split from the LSSP(R) in April 1968 was only the last of a series of crises and breakaways that have beset the LSSP(R) since its founding in the necessary break from the LSSP. One of the reasons for these periodic crises is that the leadership of the LSSP(R), or at least a part of it, could not adapt itself to the new reality of a reduced size of the party and tried to operate as they did during the days of the mass LSSP. The United Secretariat was completely correct in stating that there was no principled political basis for the split of the Edmund group from the LSSP(R). The 4th International hopes that eventually all Trotskyist forces in Ceylon will be able to unite their efforts in one organization. However at this time, the latest split and the wounds it has caused being too recent to allow the two groups to function seriously as one.

(3) The evidence placed before the Commission tends to support the conclusion that the policies followed by Comrade Bala—especially in his dual role as CMU secretary and as LSSP(R) secretary—were gravely compromising to the 4th International. The Commission was not in a position to get a clear enough picture of the policies of Comrade Bala in the concrete circumstances of Ceylon and the LSSP(R) to propose that this section be disaffiliated by the World Congress. But we strongly feel the need for further investigation of this matter. We therefore recommend the establishment of a small Commission composed of experienced comrades, preferably including at least one comrade able to speak the languages of Ceylon who could investigate the case by going to that country. At the same time, of course, the FI should not only investigate, but should try to help the LSSP(R) concretely in its work.

Specifically we urge the World Congress the following:—

(1) That the leading bodies of the International be instructed to appoint a small investigating committee along the lines mentioned above. This committee will submit a report of its findings and its recommendations for action to the next meeting of the IEC.

(2) That the IEC act with all possible speed on the recommendations of this committee with full powers of a World Congress including the power to disaffiliate the LSSP(R) as the Ceylon section of the 4th International if it feels this is the proper action.

(3) That until the IEC decides otherwise, the LSSP(R) remains the Ceylon section of the FI and thus should be given all possible assistance in its work by all bodies of the International.

(4) That the double function of Comrade Bala as the secretary of both the CMU and the section be terminated as rapidly as possible.

(5) The RSP would not be recognized as the Ceylon section even were there not already a recognized section in Ceylon. The unacceptable methods by which this tendency carried through its factional fight before and after the split dictate a very reserved attitude on this question. We appeal

to the RSP to prove its loyalty to the FI in renouncing at once the pretension of being the recognized section, by retracting the above mentioned attacks of a factional [nature] upon the LSSP(R) and its leadership, and by this means prepare the eventual regrouping of the Trotskyist forces of Ceylon in a united section.

INDIAN DELEGATE'S REPORT

The Ceylon Commission invited both Comrade Bala Tampoe as General Secretary of the LSSP(R), the official section of the Fourth International in Ceylon, and Comrade Edmund Samarakkody, leader of the RSP which has broken with the section, to explain their respective positions in connection with the split of April 1968 following a special Conference of the Party.

The Commission had before it a written representation submitted by the Provisional Committee of the RSP entitled "Events leading to the split in LSSP(R) in April 1968" demanding that the LSSP(R) be disaffiliated as a section of the Fourth International on the grounds that the latter was following bourgeois politics alien to Marxism-Leninism and further suggests that the RSP be recognized as a section in its place.

The RSP has also made some charges of a personal nature against Comrade Bala as the leader of the LSSP(R). These charges relate to a trip made by Comrade Bala to the U.S. of America on an invitation and financed by the Asia Foundation and also to the unusually friendly relations maintained by him with the British and West German diplomatic missions in Colombo.

Comrade Bala on the other hand made a separate representation in a statement on behalf of the CC of the LSSP(R) challenging the right of Comrade Edmund, a former member of the IEC, to be present at the World Congress as a representative of a split away group. He had accused Comrade Edmund of splitting the Party in defiance of a specific directive given by the Fourth International leadership for maintaining unity, and of now trying to cover it up with various baseless charges.

The Commission sought clarification from both comrades on the charges and counter-charges made by them against each other. It is indeed regrettable that the split in the LSSP(R) took place in the manner in which it did without giving proper opportunity to the International leadership to intervene and avert it if possible.

Comrade Edmund justified the split on the grounds that the differences between his tendency and the majority of the LSSP(R) had reached a stage where they could not be resolved within a single organization. He also maintained that he kept the United Secretariat informed of the developments. He claimed the support of 40 out of 110 members who constituted the LSSP(R) in 1964 after they broke away from the reformist LSSP led by N.M. Perera as a protest against the class collaborationist coalition politics of the leadership of the united LSSP.

The LSSP(R) which was recognized as an official section of the Fourth International in 1964 had to contend with the

secession of a pro-coalition tendency led by Comrade Karlo which has since entered the reformist LSSP. It had then to face the disruptionist activities of the Healyites inside its organizational fold. After the April 1968 split the Healyites have left the Party to form their own separate group. It has been contended that some of the Healyites are still in the LSSP(R) led by Comrade Bala.

The latest split has not only seriously undermined the prestige of the Fourth International in Ceylon where the Trotskyist movement had once a mass party in the LSSP which has since degenerated. On the basis of some reports before the Commission there is no guarantee that the LSSP(R) as constituted at present after April 1968 will not further split especially in the context of the Healy tendency in the fold.

Therefore it is necessary for the World Congress to re-examine the entire strategy of constructing a section of the Fourth International in Ceylon by regrouping the best elements of the Trotskyist movement.

It must be said that the Commission did not have any evidence to substantiate the charge made by Comrade Edmund that Comrade Bala is an agent of the CIA, because he accepted a trip to the U.S.A. on a project sponsored by the Asia Foundation. The Commission rejects the charge as irresponsible and motivated by factional considerations.

But at the same time the Commission cannot but take a dim view of the manner in which Comrade Bala got himself invited to the U.S.A. ostensibly under a project sponsored by the Harvard University. Although Comrade Bala maintains that he had kept the United Secretariat and SWP informed about his trip, some of his activities in Washington like his interview with McNamara have not been fully explained. Also the unusually friendly relations he maintains with the diplomatic missions of West Germany (he was invited to a dinner party by West German Chancellor Kiesinger) and U.K. (he and his wife were invited to a luncheon by the British High Commissioner in the midst of a strike of plantation workers)—all these do not befit a militant trade unionist and a revolutionary Marxist belonging to the Fourth International. More important, however, is the fact that the political positions adopted by the LSSP(R) leadership on a number of questions during the last two or three years and the trade union tactics pursued by Comrade Bala as leader of the CMU also give scope for a great deal of misunderstanding. There is enough documentary evidence to show that the LSSP(R) has been pursuing a line on issues like united fronts with other working-class organizations which, to say the least, does not conform to the general strategy of the Fourth International movement. The role of the LSSP(R) during some of the recent strikes in Ceylon like the Government Employees strike and workers' strike action against devaluation measures of the UNP government, and its consistent refusal to have joint action with other working-class parties has been such as to place the party in the camp of the enemy as opposed to workers in action. It has been even alleged that during a recent strike some of the CMU units on specific instructions from the leadership resorted to strikebreaking activities—not

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... Tampoe

a complimentary development for the Fourth International movement.

Further the letter written by Comrade Bala to the Prime Minister of the UNP government during the anti-devaluation strike and the privileged treatment given to him to hold a public meeting when meetings by others were banned in Colombo—along with some other incidents—have made Comrade Bala a suspect in the eyes of the militant working-class movement in Ceylon. Comrade Bala's contention that the charges had been borrowed from the journals published by the LSSP, CP(M) and pro-Peking group, etc., does not minimize the gravity of the situation.

There is enough evidence to show that the CMU is controlled bureaucratically by Comrade Bala. His wife is an important paid functionary of the CMU. So are some of the other colleagues of his in the LSSP(R). The fact that a section controls a big union like the CMU with a membership of 30,000 is indeed a positive gain. But it must be remembered that the CMU consists mostly of white collar employees known for their conservative political outlook especially in Ceylon. And there is an unfortunate tendency on the part of Comrade Bala to subordinate the politics of the LSSP(R) to the needs of the CMU.

This perhaps explains to a large extent the opportunist tactics pursued by the party on several trade union questions. Whatever be the final decision of the World Congress on the status of the LSSP(R) there is certainly a need for separating the leadership of the LSSP(R) from that of the CMU. In other words the top functionary of the CMU should not be the chief executive of the Party especially when the CMU represents the only mass [base] of the Party in Ceylon.

There are several charges against the leadership of the LSSP(R) which could not be verified on the basis of the documents placed before the Commission. But there is enough grounds to feel that there is something rotten about the functioning of the Ceylon section as it stands. It has been alleged by a member of the LSSP(R), Comrade T.M. Perera for example, that the leadership denied any representation to the minority represented by Edmund on even the CC of the LSSP(R). Even if some of the charges are exaggerated the repercussions of unseemly controversy now raging in Ceylon in other countries can be far reaching.

Under the circumstances, the Commission feels that it would seriously undermine the prestige of the Fourth International as an international party of the revolutionary proletariat if the LSSP(R) as constituted today is continued as an official section of the Fourth International. Its bona fides are in doubt, even if there is no slur on the character of the individual leaders of the Party. The Commission therefore recommends that the LSSP(R) should be disaffiliated as a section to create the proper political conditions and facilitate the regrouping of genuine Trotskyist elements in Ceylon as a new section of the Fourth International.

At the same time the Commission rejects the claim of the RSP to be granted recognition as an official section of the Fourth International as the behavior of its leadership in

precipitating a split has been far from being responsible. The Commission deeply regrets to recommend such steps in a country where the Trotskyist movement has had a long tradition. It would have favored a course whereby the two tendencies that have split from each other could be brought together into a single party. Such a possibility does not exist for the present.

The Commission suggests that the World Congress should set up a special Commission with powers to visit Ceylon at an early date and explore the possibility of a new section of the Fourth International being built in that country.

"WORLD CONGRESS" MINUTES

"MINUTES OF THE THIRD WORLD CONGRESS SINCE REUNIFICATION (NINTH WORLD CONGRESS) OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL, WORLD PARTY OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION."

[Extracts dealing with Ceylon]

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE CONGRESS.

Procedural motions from the outgoing United Secretariat:

d. That the following commissions be constituted with the following members:

3. Ceylon Commission—Therese, Abel, Kailas, Pia, Peng, Okatani (if he arrives).

Bala raises question as to the basis for constitution of the Ceylon Commission.

Clarification by Livio for the outgoing United Secretariat that the Ceylon Commission was constituted to review an appeal and charges made by Comrade Edmund, a member of the outgoing IEC.

Pia requests that he not be a member of the Ceylon Commission.

Amendment by Pia: That Pia be removed from the Ceylon Commission.

Amendment by Pia defeated.

Motion by Therese: To approve the composition of all commissions as amended.

Motion carried.

XI. REPORT FROM THE CEYLON COMMISSION by Pia.

Motions from Ceylon Commission:

1. That the leading bodies of the International be instructed to appoint a small investigating committee along the lines mentioned above. This committee will submit a report of its findings and its recommendations for action to the next meeting of the IEC.

2. That the IEC act with all possible speed on the recommendations of this committee with the full powers of a

World Congress, including the power to disaffiliate the LSSP(R) as the Ceylon section of the Fourth International if it feels this is the proper action.

3. That until the IEC decides otherwise, the LSSP(R) remains the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, and thus should be given all possible assistance in its work by all bodies of the International.

4. That the double function of Comrade Bala as secretary of both the CMU and the section be terminated as rapidly as possible.

5. The RSP would not be recognized as the Ceylon section even were there not already a recognized section in Ceylon. The unacceptable methods by which this tendency carried through its factional fight before and after the split dictate a very reserved attitude on this question. We appeal to the RSP to prove its proclaimed loyalty to the Fourth International in renouncing at once the pretension of being the recognized section, by retracting the above-mentioned unacceptable attacks upon Comrade Bala, by renouncing further attacks of a factional nature upon the LSSP(R) and its leadership, and by this means prepare the eventual regrouping of the Trotskyist forces of Ceylon in a united section.

Motion by Pia: That Bala and Edmund be given each one-half hour to explain their positions.

Motion carried.

Discussion on Ceylon Commission report: Edmund, Bala, Pierre.

Motion by Pierre: That the only question to be discussed now is the recognition of the Ceylon section.

Discussion.

Motion carried.

Continuation of discussion on Ceylon Commission report: Walter, Abel.

Motion by Abel: That the International Executive Committee investigate with the full power of the World Congress the allegations made by the comrades from Ceylon and that the incoming IEC have the power to disaffiliate the Ceylon section pending the results of the investigation.

Continuation of discussion on Ceylon Commission report: Lewis, Walter, Abel, Gulam, Pierre.

Summary of Ceylon Commission report by Pia.

XIII. VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS AND COMMISSION REPORTS.

5. Motion by Abel:

a. That this World Congress rejects the request that the LSSP(R) be disaffiliated and that the RSP of Comrade Edmund be recognized as the Ceylon section.

b. The LSSP(R) is and remains the Ceylon section of the Fourth International.

c. That in view of the charges leveled, we instruct the International Control Commission to carry out a thorough investigation and to submit a report containing its findings and

its recommendations for action to the coming meeting of the IEC.

Motion by Pierre:

a. The World Congress rejects the request by Comrade Edmund for disaffiliation of the LSSP(R).

b. The LSSP(R) is and remains the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International.

c. The next session of the IEC will have on its agenda the activity of the Ceylon section.

Points a. and b. of both motions carried unanimously.

Roll call vote on point c. of Abel's motion.

Full delegates: 14 for, 28 against, 8 abstentions.

Fraternal delegates: 8 for, 8 against, no abstentions.

Motion defeated.

Voice vote on point c. of Pierre's motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

XIV. ELECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Motion by Walter: That the following comrades make up the IEC: . . . Bala. . .

Motion by Walter: To accept slate as amended by inclusion of [two additional nominees] as full members.

Motion carried unanimously. ■

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...Economism

(Continued from page 24)

economism is the failure of the working class, in the absence of revolutionary leadership, to reject bourgeois ideology and place its revolutionary class interests above particular, sectional or apparent needs or desires. Concretely, economism manifests itself in competition between groups of workers undercutting or destroying the unity of the entire class, support by the labor movement for its national bourgeoisie, failure to fight racial and sexual oppression, indifference to democratic rights and civil liberties, and a lack of concern for the cultural heritage of mankind (bourgeois culture).

What economism is not is the workers' strong desire for a higher standard of living. On the contrary, the basis of economism is the material and cultural oppression of the working class. It is material deprivation, or the fear of it, which causes groups of workers to view their particular and immediate interests as more important than any other consideration. It is social and cultural oppression which causes workers to accept pernicious bourgeois ideologies like nationalism and religion. The struggle to raise the material and cultural level of the workers is essential to the real struggle against economism. The need for a revolutionary transitional program is precisely to ensure that these gains do not come at the expense of other sections of the oppressed but transcend the framework of competition for "a slice of the pie." Preachments of moral uplift in the labor movement are not a serious fight against economism.

Social-Democratic Reformism and Trade Unionism

There is a strong tendency on the left to identify economism with simple trade unionism and thus to see any concern with the affairs of government as a step away from economism. The Workers League, American affiliate of Gerry Healy's "International Committee," presents any strike propaganda containing demands on the government, or raising the slogan of a labor party regardless of its program, as inherently anti-economist. Lenin is sufficiently explicit that economism does not mean merely lack of concern for "politics." The economism/politics dichotomy demonstrates crude anti-Leninism. In *What Is To Be Done?* Lenin repeatedly insists:

"Lending 'the economic struggle itself a political character' means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction of trade [union] demands, the improvement of working conditions in each separate trade . . . by legislative and administrative methods. This is precisely what all trade unions do and have always done . . . the phrase 'lending the economic struggle itself a political character' means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms."

Trade unions are always and necessarily impeded by the bourgeois state. Even the most backward trade union bureaucrats are in favor of reducing legal restrictions on themselves and achieving through government reforms what cannot be attained over the bargaining table.

Social-democratic reformism and simple business unionism are two forms of economism that usually co-exist peacefully within the labor movement. And when reformism and business unionism do conflict, it is not always "politics" (reformism) that represents the higher form of class struggle. In the U.S. proto-social-democratic, "progressive" unionists (Sidney Hillman, Walter Reuther) have often been less

militant in industrial conflicts than straight business unionists (John L. Lewis, Jimmy Hoffa). This is because the "politically concerned," "progressive" union bureaucrats are closely associated with a wing of the Democratic Party, which they don't want to embarrass by industrial disruption. The "anti-economism" of these politically sensitive union bureaucrats is a facade for sellouts and a cover for seeking bourgeois respectability.

Coalitionism

One of the few constant elements in the New Left radicalism of the past ten years has been the denial of the unique and leading role of the organized working class in the socialist revolution. Replacements have been sought in "the wretched of the earth," the "Third World," racial and ethnic minorities in countries like the U.S., then the lumpens, students and/or youth dropouts. Recently a spirit of ecumenism has made itself felt in radical circles and all oppressed social groups are expected to participate in the revolution on an equal footing.

The strategy is seen as building a coalition of various oppressed groups on a "program" achieved through the multi-lateral trading of demands. For example, if the women's liberation movement supports the repeal of anti-strike legislation, the unions in turn are expected to support the repeal of anti-abortion laws. The two most developed advocates of coalitionism in the ostensibly Marxist U.S. left are the Socialist Workers Party and the Labor Committee. The SWP projects a coalition largely based on ethnic and sexual groups around a petty-bourgeois utopian program, while the Labor Committee presents a coalition of economically defined groups around a social-democratic program. Thus, the SWP foresees a black, Chicano, women's, homosexuals' and workers' revolution, while the LC looks forward to a trade unionist, unemployed, welfare recipient, white-collar and student soviet.

Its advocates see coalitionism as a means of fighting economism. In actuality, coalitionism is simply another form of economism. It is based on the central theoretical premise of economism—that the working class cannot transcend (as distinct from disregard or deny) its immediate sectional interests and identify its interests with all the oppressed and with the future of humanity. Coalitionism does not seek to transform the consciousness of workers, but simply to gain their acquiescence for some "other" group's "program" on the basis of necessarily unstable bargains. To the extent that they concern themselves with the labor movement at all, coalition advocates perpetuate the view, that workers are selfish pigs whose political activities are correlated purely and simply to their paychecks.

Working-Class Conservatism and Petty-Bourgeois Utopianism

Revisionists and fakers feed upon the left's general lack of familiarity with pre-Marxian socialism. Thus people are permitted to call themselves Marxists while putting forward the very ideas against which Marxism developed. A superficial view of Leninism is that it developed solely in opposition to reformism and simple trade unionist consciousness. But Bolshevism also developed in intense struggle against petty-bourgeois utopian radicalism, particularly in its anarchist variant. As Lenin noted in *Left-Wing Communism*:

"It is not yet sufficiently known abroad that Bolshevism grew, took shape and became steeled in long years of struggle against 'petty-bourgeois revolutionariness,' which smacks of or borrows something from anarchism, and which in all essentials falls short of the conditions and requirements for sustained proletarian class struggle."

The hallmark of utopian socialism is the belief that socialist consciousness is based on a generalized moral sense, unrelated to existing social relations. Utopian socialism counterposes itself to Marxism by its denial that the organized working class, driven by material exploitation under capitalism, is uniquely the leading force in the socialist revolution. On one plane, utopian socialism is a reflection of the moral and intellectual snobbery of the petty bourgeoisie. Insofar as utopian socialism concerns itself with attempting a class analysis of the revolution, it usually locates the leading force in the educated middle class, particularly the intelligentsia, which is presumed to be genuinely concerned about ideas, unlike the working class which presumably will sell out socialist principles for a mess of porridge.

Working-Class Progressivism

Existing working-class social attitudes certainly fall far short of socialist consciousness. However, it is equally certain that of the major classes in society, the working class is everywhere the most socially progressive. It is the working-class parties, even despite their treacherous bourgeoisified reformist leaderships, that stand for more enlightened social policies. In Catholic Europe and in Islam, it is the working-class parties that carry the main burden of the struggle against religious obscurantism. The distinctly non-economist issue of divorce was an important factor in breaking the alliance between the Italian social democrats and the dominant bourgeois party, and has stood as a major obstacle to the projected bloc between the Italian CP and left Christian Democrats. In England the anti-capital-punishment forces were overwhelmingly concentrated in the Labour, not in the Conservative or Liberal, Party.

It is true that the relatively progressive social policies of most workers' parties do not accurately reflect the most backward elements in the class. (Aspiring social democrats use this as a justification for accommodating to the labor bureaucracy, insisting that it is to the "left" of the "average" worker.) All this shows is that working-class organizations represent a higher form of political consciousness than workers taken as atomized individuals in the manner of public opinion polls. This is because the activists and organizers of workers' organizations represent a certain selection, generally of the most conscious workers who have already broken from personal "economism" and see themselves as representatives of broader class interests. Working-class organizations are shaped by the attitudes of what Lenin called "the advanced workers." Ideologically conservative workers are almost always politically passive, forced by social pressure against being activists in the right-wing bourgeois parties.

Marxists have always been profoundly aware of and concerned with working-class conservatism. Genuine Marxism, in contrast to utopian moralism, locates and fights this conservatism in the actual living conditions of workers. As early as the Communist Manifesto, the demands for a shortened work week to give workers the leisure necessary for political and cultural activity, for the emancipation of

women, and for free universal higher education, for example, have been an important aspect of revolutionary socialist policy. The utopian moralists have no program to counter working-class backwardness, simply emitting cries of horror coupled with occasional predictions that the working class will be the vanguard of fascism.

Trade Unions and Revolution

An important anarcho-Maoist myth is that trade unions are simply bargaining agents for particular groups of workers and are inherently apolitical. While this may have been true in the nineteenth century, when labor unions were weak, defensive organizations, it is certainly not true now. In all advanced capitalist countries, and particularly those which have mass social-democratic parties, trade unions exercise considerable influence in all aspects of political life. Even in the U.S. in the 1960's—a period in which the unions were regarded as particularly passive and bread-and-butter oriented—the union bureaucracy was intimately involved in the major social issues. Liberal union bureaucrats like Walter Reuther helped finance the Southern civil rights movement of the early 1960's and played an important role in keeping it within the limits of bourgeois reformism. Millions of dollars in union dues are spent by union lobbyists seeking to pressure Washington politicians. The deeply conservative AFL-CIO central leadership under George Meany is one of the few significant social bases remaining for a "hawk" policy in Vietnam. The problem is not that the labor movement is apolitical, but that it is tied to bourgeois politics. The role of revolutionaries in the unions is not "to divert the economic struggle to a political struggle," but to overthrow the conservative, reformist bureaucracy and pursue a revolutionary policy on both the industrial and the political level.

To assert that trade unions are inherently parochial and economist organizations is undialectical. All genuine class organizations (e.g. unions, parties, factory committees) reflect the class struggle. To say that unions as such (i.e., simply as bargaining agencies for particular groups of workers) cannot be revolutionary is a tautology. But unions can give birth to other forms of organization (e.g. parties, general strike committees, workers' councils) and can themselves provide the structure for a workers' insurrection, ceasing then to function simply as "unions." As Trotsky, who certainly knew something about the organization of revolutions, said: "in spite of the enormous advantages of soviets as organs of struggle for power, there may well be cases where the insurrection unfolds on the basis of other forms of organization (factory committees, trade unions, etc.)."

The radicalization of the masses must take place through struggle within the mass organizations of the class, regardless of form. It is not possible for revolutionary consciousness to develop among the mass of workers without lengthy and intense struggles and the intervention of communists in such fundamental mass organizations as the unions. To term this perspective "economism," as do the New Leftists, is to transform "Leninism" into a justification for petty-bourgeois utopian-moralistic anti-Marxism. ■

[This article is adapted from a leaflet produced by the Spartacist League of New Zealand.]

The Faces of Economism

Revisionism is an attempt to attack the substance of Marxism-Leninism without openly coming into conflict with its great authority. Therefore revisionism often takes the form of maintaining lip-service to traditional Marxist terminology but re-defining (usually broadening) certain key concepts in order to smuggle in a different political line. For example the term "self-determination," which for Lenin simply meant the ability of a nation to establish a separate state, has been transformed, most notably by the Socialist Workers Party, into the thoroughly utopian reformist concept of freedom from all oppression (class exploitation, national and racial oppression, sexual oppression, etc.) through separation or even "community control" within U.S. capitalism.

While the term "economism" has not undergone so grotesque a change, it also has been broadened well beyond its Marxist meaning. For Lenin, the "economists" were a distinct tendency in the Russian socialist movement which held that socialists should concentrate on improving the conditions of working-class life and leave the fight against Czarist absolutism to the liberals. After *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, Lenin rarely used the term and referred to similar attitudes as reformism or narrow trade union consciousness. Nevertheless the term "economism," which has become an important part of the contemporary radical vocabulary, need not be restricted to a purely historical category. However it is essential that it not be given a

meaning fundamentally subversive to Leninism, i.e. that Lenin's authority not be put behind ideas alien to Marxism.

Anti-"Economism" as Anti-Materialist Spiritualism

Attacks on "economism" are a frequent rallying cry of petty-bourgeois radicals whose response to labor reformism and working-class backwardness is to reject the working class as the driving force of the revolution. The current popularity of the term probably stems from its widespread use in the Chinese "Cultural Revolution," where "economism" was identified with a desire for a higher standard of living. "Economist consciousness" was the sin of workers who resisted the "Cultural Revolution"—that is, who were unwilling to make the material sacrifices demanded of them by the Maoist faction. The political thrust of the "anti-economism" campaign was evident during the 1967 nationwide railway strike, when Red Guards demanded that railway workers accept a 12% pay cut and disregard standard safety regulations. This would have concentrated greater economic surplus in the hands of the Maoist bureaucracy, but would not have significantly benefited the Chinese masses.

It is precisely the anti-materialist spiritual aspects of Maoism—its rejection of the "consumer society" and Khrushchev's "goulash communism"—that provides the link between the early New Left of Herbert Marcuse and the later popularity of Third World anarcho-Maoism. The likes of Robin Blackburn of the British *New Left Review* and Rudi Deutschke of the German SDS can be considered transitional figures.

Anarcho-Maoist attacks on working-class "economism" are similar to Victorian conservative attacks on "the intense selfishness of the lower classes" (the phrase is from Kipling, poet laureate of British imperialism). These attitudes are generally voiced by genuine reactionaries. Marshal Petain blamed the fall of France on the "love of pleasure of the French common people." As George Orwell once remarked, this statement is seen in its proper perspective if we compare the amount of pleasure in the life of the average French worker or peasant with Petain's own!

The anti-Marxist perversion of the term "economism" by the Maoists and their New Left sycophants reflects fear of and contempt for the working masses on the part of petty-bourgeois strata. In the case of the Chinese bureaucracy, it is a real fear that the aspirations and organization of the Chinese working class threaten its privileged position. In the case of the Western radical intelligentsia, it is a belief that the social backwardness and cultural narrowness of the working masses threaten its life styles—both bourgeois and "liberated"—and values.

What Is Economism?

In the most general sense, economism is the failure of the working class to embrace its historic role, or in Marx's words, failure to realize that the proletariat cannot liberate itself without "destroying all the inhuman conditions of life in contemporary society." (The Holy Family) In other words,

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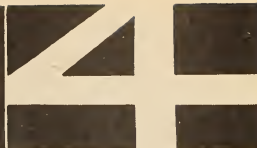
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The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon

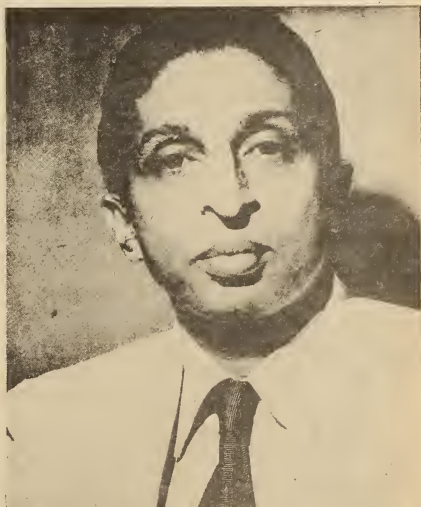
by Edmund Samarakkody

The Editorial Board of *Spartacist* is proud to bring to our readers an important article making accessible to Trotskyists in the U.S. and internationally an analysis of the history and degeneration of the Trotskyist movement in Ceylon. This understanding is crucial for the rebirth of Trotskyism in Ceylon. The Ceylon experience has profound lessons for our movement, especially in the underdeveloped countries, in the struggle to build sections of an authentic Fourth International rooted in the working class.

The author, Edmund Samarakkody, is uniquely qualified to comment on this experience. A veteran Trotskyist militant and currently spokesman for the Revolutionary Workers Party of Ceylon, Comrade Samarakkody was a founding leader of the Ceylon section of the Fourth International. His early experience dates back to trade-union organizing for the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) in the years before World War II. During the war, Comrade Samarakkody, along with other central leaders of the LSSP, was interned by the British and, following his escape, was involved in coordinating the activities of the illegalized LSSP. He then joined other leaders of the LSSP in temporary emigration to India—a crucial internationalizing experience for the Ceylonese Trotskyists—until the end of the war.

Comrade Samarakkody's oppositional history began in 1957, when he and other left militants in the LSSP resisted the LSSP's accommodation to the bourgeois nationalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). Particularly crucial in understanding the degeneration of the international Trotskyist movement is the

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Edmund Samarakkody

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light cast by Comrade Samarakkody's article on the wretched role of the Pabloist International Secretariat (now United Secretariat) in acquiescing to the LSSP's accommodationist policy toward the SLFP until the U.Sec. revisionists were at last forced to disavow the LSSP when the LSSP entered the SLFP-led popular-front government of Mrs. Bandaranaike in 1964. As the article demonstrates, both the Pabloists of the U.Sec. and the Healyites (International Committee) must seek to ignore the real history of the LSSP before 1964 in order to conceal their own complicity, dictated by their pervasive opportunism.

After the 1964 debacle, the U.Sec. revisionists denounced the LSSP's entry into the government and backed the LSSP (Revolutionary), led by the trade-union bureaucrat Bala Tampoe, which split in opposition to the entry into the government. Within the LSSP(R) Comrade Samarakkody led a left opposition against the Tampoe leadership. After two years of struggle, Comrade Samarakkody and his supporters left the LSSP(R) following a Special Conference (18-19 April 1968) and constituted the Revolutionary Samasamaja Party (now Revolutionary Workers Party) of Ceylon.

As part of his continuing political battle against the revisionists, Comrade Samarakkody was instrumental in bringing to the atten-

tion of the world Trotskyist movement the fundamentally corrupt role of Bala Tampoe, through forcing a special Commission on Ceylon at the "Ninth World Congress" of the U.Sec. in April 1969. Following the U.Sec.'s suppression of the accusations against Tampoe and the findings of the U.Sec.'s own Commission, Comrade Samarakkody transmitted to us the actual reports of this Commission, which we published in *Spartacist* #21 (Fall 1972).

—The Editors

During a period of two decades up to 1964, it was the claim of the leaders of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International"¹ that the LSSP² was the strongest Trotskyist mass party within the "world organisation." Undoubtedly, the LSSP was the working-class-based party with the widest mass base. It was in the leadership of a considerable sector of the trade-union movement and had strong support among sections of the peasantry and of the urban petty bourgeoisie. It had a reputation for intransigence in its opposition to capitalism-imperialism and for its incorruptible and militant leadership of the working class and toilers, and as a champion of the rights of the Tamil-speaking minority.³ In the words of Ernest Mandel, a leader of the United Secretariat, "Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Gunawardena were brilliant Marxist thinkers who have written some of the best revolutionary

¹ The fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat" was formed in 1963 as a result of the reunification of the Socialist Workers Party (U.S.) led by Farrell Dobbs with the "International Secretariat" (I.S.) of Michel Pablo, Ernest Mandel, Pierre Frank and Livio Maitan. The SWP had broken with the I.S. in 1953 in protest against Pablo's liquidation of the sections of the Fourth International into the dominant Stalinist and social-democratic parties. The "reunification" amounted to a non-aggression pact, sweeping under the rug issues which had divided ostensibly Trotskyist forces for a decade, and codified the SWP's capitulation to Pabloism by calling for support to bourgeois nationalists and peasant guerrillaists in the backward countries.

² The Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP—Ceylon Socialist Party) was founded in 1935 by a group of young, British-trained intellectuals. During its early years the LSSP was a loose mass organization committed to socialism but

with a basically reformist program. The Stalinist wing led by Pieter Keuneman was expelled in 1940 in the wake of the Hitler-Stalin pact and the Stalinists' flipflops in their attitudes toward the Second World War. The LSSP opposed the war, causing the British to jail its leaders.

³ A minority of southern Indian descent. One section of the Tamils has been on the island from early, pre-colonial, times. The great majority, who make up the bulk of Ceylonese plantation workers, were originally imported by the British in the middle and late 19th century to work on coffee and later tea estates. Tamils make up roughly 10 percent of Ceylon's population. However, in 1949 several hundred thousand Tamil plantation workers (who had had the right to vote since 1931) were disenfranchised. Since then discriminatory citizenship requirements have made the great majority of Tamils officially stateless, without legal rights in either Ceylon or India.

pamphlets in South East Asia....They undoubtedly assimilated the whole body of the basic Trotskyist concepts."⁴

However, it was the same party, the LSSP, with its reputation for revolutionary intransigence, and with its "brilliant Marxist thinkers," that ignominiously collapsed in June 1964, when, by a majority decision, it entered a coalition government with the SLFP,⁵ the party of the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie, just when the bankruptcy of the policies of the Sirima Bandaranaike government was becoming manifest to the working class and toilers and when conditions were ripening for the development of mass struggle against the government and the capitalist class.

Not only did this reputed Trotskyist party join the ranks of the opportunists by this alliance with the bourgeoisie for the betrayal of the masses, but in 1971, it became directly responsible for the worst massacre of youth ever known in Ceylon or elsewhere—the police-army killings by shooting and torture of thousands of youth who rose in revolt against the capitalist coalition government. And, it is this party that today, together with the Stalinists, is sustaining a capitalist regime which is preparing the road, in the manner of the Allendes, for an open military dictatorship.

But why did this happen? How did this "Trotskyist" party collapse and join the ranks of Stalinist and social-democratic betrayers?

We shall let the same Ernest Mandel of the United Secretariat answer this question. Here is his explanation in his article published in the *International Socialist Review* in the fall of 1964. "It was never a secret to any member of the world Trotskyist movement, informed about the special problems of the Fourth International, that the section in Ceylon, the *Lanka Sama Samaja Party*, was an organisation to which the term 'Trotskyist' had to be applied with a series of specific reservations...." Mandel, it would appear, had never any doubts about the character of the LSSP. According to him "the group of Trotskyist intellectuals suddenly found themselves at the head of the largest working-class organisation in the country....

However, the party which they led could not really be called 'Bolshevik'."

Mandel's dilemma in characterisation of this party is understandable. For over two decades, the LSSP was the Ceylon unit of the International Secretariat (I.S.), and later United Secretariat (U.S.), which claimed to be the continuation of the organisation founded by Trotsky. Mandel and the leaders of the United Secretariat were called upon to explain how such a party as the LSSP could have remained a unit of an international organisation claiming to be Trotskyist! It was this question that Mandel has failed to answer. And his failure to face up to this question could well be the reason why he resorted to equivocation in regard to the character of this party.

In the view of Mandel, the LSSP had a hybrid character. "It was a party that combined left-socialist trade-union cadres, revolutionary workers who had gained class consciousness but not specifically revolutionary-Marxist education, and a few hundred genuine revolutionary-Marxist cadres...."

"In fact, while being formally a Trotskyist party, the LSSP functioned in several areas comparably to a left Social Democratic party in a relatively 'prosperous' semi-colonial country; i.e. it was the main electoral vehicle of the poor masses, it provided the main leadership of the trade unions."

If indeed "the LSSP functioned in several areas comparably to a left Social Democratic party," and if indeed it was functioning as "the main electoral vehicle of the poor masses," it was by no means difficult to understand how the leaders of this party accepted portfolios in a bourgeois government in 1964 and have continued along this road thereafter.

But if, as Mandel insists, this was a "defeat for Trotskyism in Ceylon" it is necessary to ascertain what precisely in his view led to this defeat. "The defeat suffered by Trotskyism in Ceylon," says Mandel, "is therefore essentially the story of how and why the Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Gunawardena group ["Marxist"—E.S.] lost leadership of the party

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⁴ Ernest Germain, "Peoples Frontism in Ceylon: From Wavering to Capitulation," *International Socialist Review*, Fall 1964.

⁵ The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) originated in 1951 when S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike split from the until-then dominant United National Party (UNP) amid widespread uneasiness

in the ruling class over the rampant corruption of the UNP government. Bandaranaike, former right-hand man of UNP leader D.S. Senanayake, combined a program of virulent Sinhalese chauvinism and Buddhist clericalism with timid land reform. His SLFP appealed particularly to the Sinhalese peasantry and rural intelligentsia.

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through their own weaknesses and inner contradictions...."

Mandel mentions these "weaknesses and inner contradictions"—the fatal flaw was that these key political leaders did not occupy themselves with full time party work—they remained part-time leaders...the leaders of the genuinely Trotskyist wing of the LSSP did not change their daily lives to accord with their revolutionary convictions.⁶

While the "weaknesses and inner contradictions of the leaders" were real, it is necessary for revolutionary Marxists to go beyond the personal qualities of the leaders of an ostensibly revolutionary party to ascertain why such a party betrayed the revolutionary movement and the masses. Mandel is completely wrong in stating that the weaknesses of the leaders were "essentially" the cause of the LSSP collapse. This is plain subjectivism.

Mandel's dilemma remains. He and the other leaders of the United Secretariat were not prepared to accept their share of responsibility for the collapse of the LSSP, which for two decades was accepted as a section of the International Secretariat, later United Secretariat.

The formal acceptance of the program can never be the test of a revolutionary Marxist party. That is of course a commonplace. On the other hand, what is basic to the Leninist concept of the party is the basing of the politics of the party on the revolutionary program and above all on activity in a revolutionary perspective.

And, in regard to the LSSP, there was not even a formal acceptance of a Trotskyist program, because in reality there was no program as such. What was termed the program, as late as 1950 (unity congress) was only a listing of "fundamental aims," a brief explanation of a transitional program, a list of transitional demands and the positions of the party on impe-

rialist war, defense of the Soviet Union, on Stalinist parties and popular-frontism.

A Marxist analysis of the socio-economic factors in the country, class forces and class relations, the character of the Ceylon revolution and the dynamics of the Ceylon revolution—all these issues had no place in this "program". Documents on programmatic questions were never the heritage of the party. Nor could the leaders of the United Secretariat, the Mandels and Pierre Franks, point to any intervention on their part with the LSSP in this regard.

1942 Split

The existence, from the beginning, of a Marxist wing in this social-democratic type party was the real hope for this party. And indeed, the leaders of the [International] correctly looked to this group for the revolutionary orientation of this party.

And the opportunity came to this group and also to the leaders of the [International], when the first split took place in the LSSP between the Philip Gunawardena/N.M. Perera reformist section and the Leslie [Gunawardena]/Colvin [R. de Silva]/Bernard [Soysa] Marxist section in 1942.

It was the attempt on the part of the Marxist wing to re-organise the party programmatically and organisationally on Bolshevik lines that led to opposition from the Philip Gunawardena/N.M. Perera reformist wing and to the split of 1942. The expulsion of Philip Gunawardena and N.M. Perera from the International and the acceptance of the Bolshevik Samasamaja Party (BSP)⁷ as the Ceylon unit created favourable conditions for the building of the revolutionary party.

Although at the commencement the politics of the split were not altogether clear to the rank and file of the BSP, the further evolution of the N.M./Philip group brought into the open the different orientations. For instance, the N.M./Philip group gave proof of its deep-seated opportunism when the parliamentary fraction of their party refused to vote against the status of "independence" granted by the

⁶ Germain, *op. cit.*

⁷ The Bolshevik Samasamaja Party grew out of a 1942 factional polarization and split in the LSSP, which resulted in two groups both calling themselves "the LSSP" operating in Ceylon during the later years of the war. The more leftist group remained affiliated with the BLP(India) and after the war a BLPI letter of 8 October 1945 expelling the leaders

of the rightist group (N.M. Perera and Philip Gunawardena) formalized the split. Following an abortive attempt in late 1946 to reunify the two groups, the leftist group led by Leslie Goonewardene, Colin de Silva, Samarakody, de Souza and others, which was the smaller group, changed its name to the BSP. However, on 4 June 1950 the two groups were reunified to form the LSSP, with a grouping around Philip Gunawardena splitting away to the right.

British in 1947. The BSP fraction however voted against this fake independence.⁸

On the other hand, during the seven years of its independent existence, the BSP took meaningful steps to raise the ideological level of the party, develop revolutionary cadre and direct trade-union and other mass activities in a revolutionary perspective.

Unification

However, this favourable development for Trotskyism in Ceylon received a setback when the BSP decided on unification with the reformist N.M. Perera/Philip Gunawardena group (LSSP), which had, during this period, only strengthened its reformism, both in its trade-union and parliamentary activities.

And what is more, the unification was effected without any discussion on the fundamental problems of the Ceylon revolution, strategy and tactics, on Stalinism, reformism and parliamentarism. It was the failure of the Marxist wing (BSP) that no document giving the correct orientation on these relevant issues was adopted at this unification. Only the "program" which we have already referred to was adopted. This "program" was so sketchy and only in outline, that the N.M. Perera wing had no difficulty in taking the party along their reformist course.

This unification, which proved disastrous for the future of Trotskyism in Ceylon, nevertheless received the approval of the leaders of the United Secretariat (then the International Secretariat). And what is more, it was their view that a policy of co-existence with the N. M. Perera reformist wing was correct for the Marxist group. In the view of Mandel, "the problem of overcoming the old divisions and of blocking anything that could precipitate a new split with N.M. Perera became an obsession among the key political leaders. *The policy was correct in itself since unification had taken place on a principled basis and since the party's activities as a whole were proceeding in accordance with the general program of Trotskyism.*"⁹ [our emphasis—E.S.]

General Program of Trotskyism

The program of Trotskyism in Ceylon had to be linked to the problems of the Ceylon revolution.

As in all backward countries, Ceylon had (1950) and still continues to have uncompleted tasks of the democratic revolution. The "Soulbury Constitution," which was a deal between the Ceylonese bourgeoisie and the British imperialists, brought only fake independence. While there was political independence over a large area, yet there was room for imperialist interference and control, even politically. In any event, the economic dominance of British imperialism continued through the ownership and control by the British of the best tea and rubber plantations and the agency houses, which controlled the exports of all agricultural products and which also had a major share of the imports for the plantation sector. The operation of British and other foreign-owned banks, and the open-door policy for British and other imperialist investments reduced political freedom to a fiction.

Twenty-five years after the grant of so-called Independence and the adoption of a new constitution with republican status (1971), the socio-economic policies of Ceylon, over a large area, cannot be decided by a Ceylon Cabinet, but by the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the imperialists!

The revolutionary wing (BSP) which correctly denounced and rejected the Soulbury Constitution as "fake independence" while the N.M. Perera wing silently endorsed the bourgeois interpretations in that regard, failed to raise this question of the Soulbury Constitution with the N.M. Perera wing at the 1950 unification. Thus by implication the BSP endorsed the opportunism of the N.M. Perera wing.

This meant that the unified LSSP adopted, by implication, a view that the bourgeoisie of a backward country in the middle of the 20th century has been able to accomplish a basic task of the bourgeois democratic revolution.

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⁸ The British government granted Ceylon a Constitution recommended by the Soulbury Commission in 1946 in order to placate demands for political independence following the war. This constitution retained an appointed Governor-General who retained control over foreign affairs, defense and minority rights. The constitution did not even provide dominion

status—"independence" within the Commonwealth—which was granted separately in 1948. Other agreements guaranteed the British continued use of military bases on Ceylon and other privileges.

⁹ Germain, *op. cit.*

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lution, i.e. the achievement of national liberation from imperialism. This meant that the LSSP was in conflict with the central thesis of the permanent revolution, that, having arrived belatedly, a congenitally weak bourgeoisie in a backward country is incapable of playing a leading role in the democratic revolution; that on the contrary, this bourgeoisie is counter-revolutionary; that the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution could be accomplished only by the proletariat (dictatorship of the proletariat) in alliance with the peasantry and in the teeth of the opposition of the native bourgeoisie—whether they be the compradors or the so-called national bourgeoisie.

The false and untenable assumption that the bourgeois democratic tasks had been accomplished by the Ceylonese bourgeoisie led the LSSP to virtually ignore thereafter—(a) the struggle for completing Ceylon's independence; (b) the struggle for minority rights of the 2 million Tamil-speaking people; (c) the struggle of the peasants for the land; and (d) the ending of the oppression and discrimination of the so-called depressed castes.

It was thus that the LSSP had no program to develop the anti-imperialist struggle although the party was opposed to imperialism. And it was thus that the LSSP had no program to develop the struggle of the peasants for land although the LSSP did demand land for the landless.

Although the LSSP supported the language and other rights of the Tamil minority and called for the acceptance of Tamil as an official language together with the Sinhala language, and also called for citizenship rights for the Tamil plantation workers, it did not have a strategy for implementing these demands.

It was thus that the LSSP failed to carry on a consistent struggle for the completion of Ceylon's independence, for the abolition of the

Soulbury Constitution. The party failed to raise the slogan of a Constituent Assembly.

The refusal of the LSSP to face the reality of the uncompleted democratic tasks gave the Ceylon bourgeoisie an unexpected opportunity to pose as the friends of the peasantry and to win over the petty-bourgeois masses generally, by putting on the mask of nationalism and talking the language of freedom fighters.

Enter Bandaranaike

S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, who broke with the UNP¹⁰ on the succession to D.S. Senanayake, was quick to take the opportunity. Raising the slogans of "Sinhalese language only" as the official language to replace English, "Give back the military bases," "Take over of foreign-owned estates," "End feudal relations in land," Bandaranaike was soon leading the mass movement, especially the peasants and lower middle class intelligentsia. From a leader of a small party of eight members in parliament, Bandaranaike found himself swept to power in 1956 (MEP—the 1st Bandaranaike Government).¹¹

Although Bandaranaike and his SLFP soon showed their state of bankruptcy in regard to (a) the anti-imperialist struggle; (b) winning of land to the peasants; and (c) the grant of minority rights and so-called economic development, this party (SLFP) of the so-called national bourgeoisie was able to keep itself at the centre of the political stage during a period of nearly 17 years up to the present due to the wrong policies of the LSSP in regard to the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie.

The Ceylonese bourgeoisie had, right up to the war period, remained a plantation and mercantile bourgeoisie. Their interests more or less dove-tailed with imperialist interests; they functioned in the perspective of continued co-existence with imperialism. They were the classic compradors.

However, it was inevitable that capitalist development in Ceylon would, even late, take the road of industrialisation. This meant that a differentiation within the bourgeoisie would sooner or later lead to the emergence of the industrial-minded bourgeoisie. And it could

¹⁰ The United National Party (UNP) was established by the plutocrat D.S. Senanayake in June 1946 and took over the government from the British in the 1947 election. Senanayake had split from the Ceylon National Congress, a loose pro-independence, exclusively Sinhalese, bourgeois formation when the CNC admitted the Stalinists during World War II.

¹¹ The Mahajama Eksath Peramuna (MEP—People's United Front) was formed in February 1956 as a coalition of the SLFP with various religious and Sinhalese chauvinist groups and the "LSSP" of Philip Gunawardena. When the Bandaranaike government collapsed in 1958-59, the Gunawardena group took the name MEP for themselves in subsequent election campaigns.

have been expected that this new section of the bourgeoisie would be in a state of conflict with the older plantation bourgeoisie or their party, the UNP, which had control of state power.

It was the existence of this new sector of the bourgeoisie—the industrial-minded sector—that found its reflection in the split away of Bandaranaike from the UNP (1951). Further, it was precisely the significance of this differentiation within the bourgeoisie that the LSSP, which according to Mandel, "functioned in accordance with the general program of Trotskyism," failed to understand.

"National" or "Liberal" Bourgeoisie

The character and the role of the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie in the backward countries was too well known, especially in the Trotskyist movement, by the time this differentiation took place in Ceylon. The tragedy of the Chinese revolution (1927), the triumph of Franco in Spain (1936-39), and the failure of the revolutionary movements in India and the other countries of Asia were basically linked to the failure of ostensible revolutionaries to understand the nature of the so-called national bourgeoisie, who seek to use the masses, not for struggle against imperialism but to win concessions from the imperialist masters.

The principal lesson derived from Marxist experience in this regard was that this sector of the bourgeoisie, while being capable of occasional but weak oppositional actions against imperialism, cannot, with any degree of consistency, develop any real confrontation with imperialism. In the context of the reality of the class struggle, the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie must necessarily betray the struggle for national liberation and enter into treacherous compromises with imperialism. "The more to the East," said Trotsky, "the more treacherous were the bourgeoisie." That meant, the more belatedly they arrive, the more treacherous they are.

While revolutionary Marxists would give critical support to some oppositional actions of the so-called national bourgeoisie, they are unequivocally opposed to national bourgeois regimes; it remains their task to carry on a consistent and irreconcilable struggle to expose their real role of treachery to the national liberation struggle and to wrest the leadership of the national struggle from their hands.

The regimes of the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie in Ceylon (SLFP, SLFP-LSSP,

SLFP-LSSP-CP) have brought about a belated but limited development of the manufacturing industries, not in conflict with imperialism, but jointly with foreign capitalists, whether in the public or private sector, undermining in this process the political independence of the country.

It is precisely this question of the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie—the Bandaranaike question—that LSSP leaders failed to understand in the light of Marxist experience. In the result, the leadership followed empirically a zig zag policy, which inevitably led them into the coalition government with the SLFP in 1964.

The 1953 Hartal—A Semi-Insurrection

It was in this state of ideological confusion and uncertainty that the LSSP was confronted with the opportunity of leading the masses in Ceylon's first revolutionary mass struggle against the government and the capitalist class reaching to the level of a semi-insurrection.

With the end of the Korean boom and the fall in the prices of the main exports, tea and rubber, the capitalist UNP government decided to maintain the profit levels of the capitalist and vested interests by imposing drastic cuts on social services and by the increase in price of rationed rice. While the price of rice was raised from =/25 cents to =/70 cents [Ceylon currency] per measure, the government withdrew the free mid-day meal to school children and increased postal fares and train fares.

The LSSP took the lead in developing mass agitation on these issues. But even while the mass movement was visibly growing around these issues, the leaders of the LSSP, who had empirically moved into a struggle situation, failed to see the revolutionary possibilities in the situation. Their perspectives did not go beyond mass protest action against the actions and policies of the government.

In this context, the LSSP leaders were taken by surprise by the response of the masses to the one-day protest action that was decided upon.

Though acting empirically, the LSSP correctly applied the tactic of the united front. The Philip Gunawardena group (MEP), the Stalinists and even the Federal Party (bourgeois-led Tamil minority Party) were pushed into becoming the co-sponsors of the Hartal¹² action.

The withdrawal of work (strike action) of

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¹² A political mass strike.

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the workers supported by the closing of business and the stoppage of work by peasants and other self-employed people, all of whom resorted to direct action struggle by barricading roads, cutting down trees and telephone posts, stopping of buses and trains—all this turned into a real confrontation with the armed forces of the government. What occurred was a semi-insurrection in which the masses fought the police and the army with stones and clubs and whatever they found by way of weapons. Nine persons were killed by police shooting.

What the working class and the masses that were in the struggle looked forward to was not a mere one-day protest action and a return to work the following day. They were in readiness for a struggle to overthrow the hated UNP government. In fact, this direct action of the masses continued on the next day also. There were clear possibilities of this Hartal action being continued for several days thereafter. But the LSSP leadership, despite the unmistakable moods of the workers and other sections of the masses, decided to keep to their plan of a mere protest action and called off the Hartal and prevented the masses from continuing the struggle.

Dynamics of the Ceylon Revolution

What the LSSP leadership had failed to develop theoretically—the dynamics of the Ceylon revolution—the Hartal struggle showed in practise, even in outline. The following features were prominently silhouetted in the political scene:

1. Contrary to the misgivings of the LSSP leaders (which some of them developed into theories later), the Ceylonese masses were not so steeped in parliamentarism that they would first have to go through a long parliamentary period before they got on to the road of revolutionary struggle. The Hartal showed that, given a revolutionary leadership, the masses could soon shed their parliamentary illusions and enter the road of mass struggle leading to the revolution itself.

2. The masses did not divide the Ceylon revolution into two stages, (a) an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal stage and (b) an anti-capitalist stage. The democratic revolution and the socialist revolution were telescoped in a single struggle. The issues that brought the masses into revolutionary struggle were issues arising

out of imperialist capitalist oppression—increase of price of rice, train fares, postal fares, etc. The capitalist class had the need to save foreign exchange through a cut in the ration of rice and cutting down of social services for the maintaining of capitalist profit levels. The uncompleted democratic tasks, completing of independence, and the ending of minority and caste oppression could be accomplished only in the course of the socialist revolution.

Despite their so-called two-stage theory, the Stalinists found themselves taken along into an anti-capitalist struggle and an uprising against a capitalist government. Also, contrary to their so-called theory, they were shown in practise that the anti-UNP struggle could not be separated from the anti-capitalist struggle.

3. Again, contrary to the orientation of the Stalinists and later also of the LSSP, it was not the so-called progressive bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie that led the masses in this struggle, but the proletariat. Led by the LSSP, it was the working class that took the leading role in this struggle. The urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the students and youth all followed the leadership of the working class. The party of the so-called progressive bourgeoisie, the Bandaranaike-led SLFP, was not ready even to be one of the sponsors of the Hartal action.

4. The alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, which is basic to the Ceylon revolution, was achieved in action. The struggle showed that it was not necessary for the proletariat to form a political alliance with a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois party in order to win the peasantry. The peasantry can be won to the side of the proletariat on the basis of support for their burning issues in opposition to the bourgeoisie.

The LSSP leadership failed to draw the lessons of this Hartal experience. It failed to theoretically evaluate the events of this semi-insurrection and relate them to the theory of the permanent revolution as it applied to Ceylon, a backward country. The LSSP leadership failed to realise that what was urgent and unpostponable was the raising of the ideological level of the party in the perspective of developing into a Bolshevik-type revolutionary combat party.

Politics of the International Secretariat

We have already noted that in the view of Mandel, in the post unification years (LSSP-

BSP), the LSSP's "activities as a whole were proceeding in accordance with the general program of Trotskyism."

Thus, in the view of the International Secretariat, there was no occasion for any serious intervention on its part in regard to the LSSP.

The truth in this regard was that, with the new turn of the I.S. in 1951 (3rd Congress) under the guidance of Pablo, there could not be, in their view, any problems for the LSSP in regard to ideological development or the building of a Bolshevik-type party.

According to the thesis of the 3rd Congress there was no need to build independent Trotskyist parties; what was necessary was to take the "quickest road to the masses" wherever they be, in the Stalinist or other reformist parties, for "the integrating" of the revolutionary Marxist cadre deeply into the so-called real movement of the masses.

The same thesis of the 3rd Congress left the door open for an interpretation that the Stalinist parties have transformed themselves from road-blocks to the proletarian revolution into parties that are capable of taking the revolutionary road.

It was against this liquidationist turn of the International that the SWP (United States)-led minority revolted and split in 1953. On the first news of the split the LSSP leadership leaned on the side of the minority and appeared to be willing to take up the struggle against Pabloist revisionism and liquidationism. But in the state of ideological confusion that reigned in the LSSP and its leadership, and in the context of the theoretical weakness of the International Committee (IC),¹³ the leaders of the LSSP wavered and jumped on to the bandwagon of the majority led by the Mandels, Pierre Franks and the Livios.

In reality, the liquidationist and revisionist line of Pablo, according to which there is no need to build independent Marxist parties, and according to which what was urgent was the "integration into the living movement of the masses"—all this dovetailed into the orientation of the LSSP leaders whose pre-occupation was developing mass activity—in the trade unions and in the electorates without revolutionary perspective.

1953 Split

On the other hand, the Pabloist pro-Stalinist

orientation found more than a responsive echo with the Henry Peiris-led faction which emerged in the party in the fall of 1952. A resolution of this faction, led by Henry Peiris, William Silva and T.B. Subasinghe, "declared that in the elections the party should have put forward the slogan of a 'Democratic Government which would have meant, at its lowest level, a Bandaranaike government, and at its highest level, a Government by a Sama Samaja majority'." It also took the position "that the party should enter into the closest possible agreement and co-operation with the CP and Philip group in the trade union and political fields" (*Short History of the LSSP*).

This was clearly the moment to investigate into the roots of reformism and Stalinism that had grown within the LSSP, to draw up a balance sheet of the efforts of the LSSP to move in a Trotskyist direction. In fact, all the basic questions of Trotskyism, the program, the application of the theory of the permanent revolution, the character of the Ceylon revolution, the role of the "national" bourgeoisie, questions of strategy and tactics, the Leninist concept of the party, were the issues that were involved in this factional struggle that burst into the open.

But the LSSP leadership conducted the fight against the reformists and Stalinists within the party by their own empirical methods and in an ad hoc manner, counterposing Trotskyist orthodoxy to the politics of the revisionists, very much in the manner of the SWP in 1953 when it opposed the line of the 3rd Congress. In the result, the factional struggle did not lead to the focusing of attention on the fundamental questions that were clearly posed before the entire party. Nor did the factional struggle help even to educate the membership of the party and to raise their ideological level, especially when the party was moving deeper into parliamentary politics, where Bandaranaike was soon to become the principal actor.

Responsive Co-operation

Having failed to understand the role of the so-called national bourgeoisie, the LSSP leadership was at a loss to know how to deal with the Bandaranaike-led MEP government that

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¹³ The International Committee was formed by those sections of the Fourth International who broke from the Pabloist International Secretariat in 1953. The IC included the SWP

led by J.P. Cannon, the majority of the French section led by Bleibtreu-Lambert, and the British grouping led by G. Healy.

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was formed after the 1956 parliamentary elections.

Succumbing to the mass hysteria and enthusiasm at the election victory of the MEP to office, the LSSP announced its attitude to the new government as one of "responsive co-operation." It was of course necessary to note the popularity of the MEP government. It was undoubtedly imperative for the LSSP to take note of the prevailing mass sentiment and the mass moods in relation to the first Bandaranaike government, before the party decided on its tactics in the situation. But it was unpardonable for a party claiming to be revolutionary Marxist to resort to equivocal formulae, and echo mass illusions when it was imperative to categorically state party positions. And in this case, it was the question of correctly characterising the MEP government which was a bourgeois bonapartist government that was seeking to deceive the masses with nationalist and socialist phraseology. It was the duty of the LSSP to patiently explain to the masses regarding the truth about the character of this government. On the contrary, the LSSP chose the occasion to opportunistically go along with the masses, whilst keeping the door open for later criticism of the government when the mass moods underwent a change.

The Mandels, Pierre Franks and the Livios of the I.S. looked on from a distance. They never once in this regard expressed their views on the LSSP line on this question. Either it was the case of the I.S. approving the LSSP line in this regard, or the I.S. did not seek to interfere in the internal affairs of a section of the International on the basis of its real orientation, that the Revolutionary International is a sum of several national parties that function independently of the International centre!

However, it was the Bandaranaike MEP regime itself that gave the LSSP the opportunity to re-assess the character of this government. Before long, the bankruptcy of "Bandaranaike principles" became evident to a section of the masses. It was to conceal this bankruptcy that Bandaranaike resorted to communalism that led to the worst anti-Tamil riots in Ceylon (1956-1958). And what was particularly helpful to the LSSP was that the organised working class lost faith in the promises of Bandaranaike and moved into strike action to win their wage demands.

But the LSSP, as before, acted only empirically. In a tail-endist fashion, the LSSP supported the working-class strikes and adopted only a more critical attitude to Bandaranaike.

Although the LSSP correctly noted that the Bandaranaike government (MEP) was bonapartist in character, it failed to draw the conclusion that mass illusions in such a government cannot easily disappear, that the LSSP had to launch consistent struggle on many fronts on reformism and Stalinism to win the masses away from "Bandaranaike politics." On the other hand, the LSSP naively believed that, with the assassination of Bandaranaike, "Bandaranaike politics" had come to an end. The LSSP even believed that the road was now open for the party to ride to parliamentary power.

It was thus that the LSSP decided to throw all its forces in the 1960 elections (March) with the aim of winning a majority to form an LSSP government in parliament. And the International Secretariat, the Mandels and the Pierre Franks, looked on approvingly with hope that the LSSP would win a majority in this election.

But the SLFP, led by the widow of Bandaranaike, came out of the elections (March 1960), as the party with the largest number of seats, although it failed to win an overall majority to form the government. The LSSP was reduced from 12 to 10 seats and was thrown into a state of confusion.

But this outcome of the elections might well have been the opportunity for the party to review its election policy which contributed in a large way to increasing mass illusions in parliament and also to disorienting the party membership. In fact the decision of the party to bid for a parliamentary majority was evidence that the party had lost all revolutionary perspective and had accepted the reformist and Stalinist parliamentary or so-called peaceful road to socialism.

Nor did the Mandels and Pierre Franks of the International Secretariat intervene correctly even after the event, in this regard. The leaders of the I.S. could not realise that what was involved here was the disease of parliamentarism and reformism that had got a stranglehold on the party, and not a question of miscalculation or wrong evaluation. Here is a sample of their orientation in this regard—

"The starting point must be a frank self criticism of the errors in analysis and evaluation committed by the party prior to the 20th March elections, namely—

(a) It thought that the objective situation was

favourable to the victory of the revolutionary movement;
(b) It supposed that the masses have already had enough experience with the SLFP and that as a result they might in their majority turn towards the LSSP."

(I.S. Document on Ceylon, October 1960)

In this context, it was no surprise that the leadership of the LSSP, which was now steeped in parliamentarism continued to look desperately for solutions within the same parliamentarist perspective. And it was thus that the next step was taken by the right-wing leader N.M. Perera who challenged all the basic positions of Trotskyism, pronounced that the proletariat in Ceylon was petty-bourgeois in outlook, that revolutionary mass struggle leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat was impossible and crudely proposed that the LSSP enter a coalition front with the SLFP "on an agreed program."

And as for the "brilliant Marxists" like Mandel, the Colvins and the Leslies, they were only a step behind N.M. Perera. In fact, it was Leslie Gunawardena that sought to give theoretical justification for the betrayal that Perera found no difficulty in proposing in the manner of the Social Democrats. Leslie Gunawardena, you see, was, in keeping with the traditions of the Trotskyist movement, against the popular front! But according to Leslie Gunawardena a popular front with an anti-capitalist program was in accordance with the program of Trotskyism! Thus Leslie Gunawardena was opposed to N.M. Perera's proposal to form a coalition government on an agreed minimum program. "This action" wrote Leslie "was light-minded and unworthy of a party that claims to employ the Marxist method!"

Four years later, in June 1964, these same "brilliant Marxists" led by this same Leslie had moved far and away from Leslie's own theory of 1960. They were opposed to the proposal of N.M. Perera not on the absence of an anti-capitalist program. Their difference with N.M. Perera was that they wanted a coalition government between the entire ULF¹⁴-LSSP-MEP, CP and the SLFP—they wanted a complete and proper popular front!

Opposition

Though late, left oppositional elements in the LSSP began to intervene. In 1957,

one year after Bandaranaike assumed office, the opposition to the policy of "responsive co-operation" manifested itself through a small group in the Central Committee. In its amendment to the political resolution of the Central Committee, this group (W. Dharmasena, Robert Gunawardena, Edmund [Samarakody], Chandra Gunasekera) stated—

"When the MEP government came into power the masses were intoxicated with illusions regarding this government. Large sections of the masses close to the party expected the party to support the MEP government. In this situation, partly due to lack of clarity (of the party) regarding the MEP government, the party offered co-operation (responsive) to the government whilst directing the parliamentary group to sit in the opposition. As the party failed to characterise the MEP government as a capitalist government, the fact that the parliamentary group sat in the opposition did not signalise its fundamental opposition or of being against the government. Whatever was the intention of the party, in the eyes of the masses, the key to the understanding of the fundamental position of the party in relation to the government was the offer of co-operation (responsive) by the party. This offer of co-operation to the capitalist government was wrong. The party could have and should have offered support to the progressive measures of the government while stating categorically that the MEP government was a capitalist government. However, unpalatable and unacceptable it may have been to the masses, the party should have characterised this government as a capitalist government and thereafter proceeded to explain." (Amendment of Edmund-Robert group in the CC, 1957).

In the further efforts to combat parliamentarism and to take the party along the path of mass struggle the group insisted that "the aim of the party in relation to the MEP government is revolutionary overthrow of the government, i.e. by the method of the mass uprising. The masses are not ready now (today) for the overthrow of the government. But in view of the failure of the government to solve the pressing problems of the people, in view of the ever increasing dissension in the MEP, and the demoralisation of its own ranks, in view of the growing militancy of the working class, the situation can change very rapidly, and at any moment from now, the masses could well raise the slogan 'Down with the MEP government.' As a bridge between their present consciousness and the stage when they will be ready for the call for the overthrow of the Govern-

¹⁴ The United Left Front (ULF) was an electoral bloc in the 1963 elections of the LSSP, the Communist Party and Philip Gunawardena's MEP on a joint program of minimal reforms.

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ment, the party will adopt as a central agitational slogan 'We do not want the capitalist MEP government, we want a *workers and peasants government*'."

Undoubtedly this group failed to come to grips with the roots of reformism in the party. It only focused attention on some aspects of party policy. Nevertheless, the orientation of this group gave promise of possibilities for the growth of a real revolutionary tendency.

It was thus an opportune moment for the leaders of the I.S. to intervene on the side of the left oppositional elements that were definitively emerging. But there was no such intervention, for the reason that these leaders, the Mandels and the Pierre Franks, had no differences with the LSSP leadership in regard to their policy of "responsive co-operation" to the Bandaranaike government.

It was only when the LSSP leaders took the inevitable step from "responsive co-operation" to the call for support of an SLFP government that the leaders of the International Secretariat intervened with a document to register their opposition.

The leaders of the I.S. were in a dilemma. If the LSSP was right when it offered co-operation (responsive co-operation) to the first Bandaranaike government (MEP) how could the LSSP be wrong when it called for and supported the formation of an SLFP government in parliament?

The answer to this question is that the LSSP was completely wrong in offering co-operation (responsive) to the bourgeois MEP government of Bandaranaike in 1956. The LSSP was once again wrong in calling for support of the bourgeois SLFP in 1960.

But the leaders of the I.S. were not prepared to admit that it was their failure that they did not state categorically that the policy of "responsive co-operation" was wrong. It was thus that the Mandels and Pierre Franks found themselves on the defensive before the LSSP reformists in their attempt to explain what they really meant by "critical support" to the SLFP government. These leaders of the I.S. were guilty of a serious distortion of the Leninist-Trotskyist position in regard to the governments of the so-called national progressive bourgeoisie! And here is their orientation in that regard—"We do not forget that, in the case of colonial and semi-colonial countries, the revolu-

tionary party can give its *critical support* to governments with a non-proletarian leadership, be they petty-bourgeois or bourgeois!" [our emphasis-E.S.](Document of the I.S. on Ceylon).

However, in the same breath, the document continued, "The support of a revolutionary party for a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois government cannot be other than critical, namely strictly conditional and limited. That means in practise that this support can be granted for progressive, effectively anti-capitalist or anti-imperialist measures, either planned or carried out, measures that must be defended against any manoeuvre or sabotage by the reactionary forces." But why this equivocation? A revolutionary Marxist party will not and cannot give even critical support to any bourgeois or petty-bourgeois government. If the Mandels and the Pierre Franks mean thereby critical support to only "progressive and anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist measures" then how do they talk of "giving critical support to governments with a non-proletarian leadership, be they petty-bourgeois or bourgeois"? They knew that what was involved here was the attitude of the revolutionary party to a bourgeois government in a colonial or semi-colonial country, and not to its attitude to certain measures of such a government. They know well that a revolutionary Marxist party could well give critical support to certain measures of bourgeois governments, even of military governments. But the attitude of a revolutionary Marxist party to a bourgeois government with even a "progressive" coloration can be nothing but irreconcilable opposition, although the manner of opposition to such a government will depend on the mass sentiment in relation to the government.

It is thus that support to a government, whether disguised as "responsive co-operation" or critical support, must be rejected as being in direct conflict with the fundamental programmatic position of the party.

But whatever were the weaknesses and equivocations of the International Secretariat, the reformist leadership of the LSSP had by their unequivocal call for support of an SLFP government in May 1960 exposed the hollowness of their claims to be a Trotskyist party. This meant that the task of revolutionary Marxists within the LSSP was to begin the struggle for a Trotskyist program and the organisation of a revolutionary tendency with or without the support of the International Secretariat.

However, the left oppositionists in the LSSP allowed themselves to be disarmed when the LSSP leadership empirically put on an oppositional stance in relation to the SLFP government, especially when sectors of the working class moved into strike action under the leadership of the LSSP. And, for its part, the International Secretariat even believed that an appeal to the party leadership from the World Congress would suffice to make these, now confirmed reformists, take a revolutionary road!

"The World Congress appeals to the Lanka Sama Samaja Party for a radical change in the political course in the direction indicated by the document of the leadership of the International."

"The Congress is confident that the next National Conference of the LSSP in whose political preparation the whole International must participate, will know how to adopt all the political and organisational decisions necessary to overcome the crisis which was revealed following on the results of the March 1960 election campaign." (Letter of 6th World Congress to LSSP)

Far from any effective participation of the International or any participation at all by the L.S. in any national conference of the LSSP "for a radical change in its political course," the Mandels and Pierre Franks were once again traversing the same parliamentarist road with the LSSP leadership, just when the working class had achieved, as never before, unity for struggle around 21 demands which could well develop into political struggle against the SLFP government and the capitalist class.

United Left Front

The Marxist tactic of the united front with Stalinist and reformist working-class parties and even bourgeois parties means nothing more than unity in action in concrete anti-imperialist or class-struggle situations. It can never mean a political alliance with such parties, which cannot have any other objective than the winning of reforms from the capitalists or the capitalist government.

The problem of the alternative government, alternative to the bourgeois government, is often posed before the revolutionary Marxists. But this question of an alternative government is linked to the dynamics of the revolution.

This means that revolutionary Marxists do not project a transitional reformist government prior to a workers government. But

this was precisely the orientation of the LSSP leaders who in their search for an alternative to a bourgeois government, proposed a government of the so-called "United Left Front" composed of the two working-class-based parties--the LSSP and CP--and the petty-bourgeois MEP (Philip Gunawardena) on an agreed program (July 1963).

The concluding paragraph of the preamble to this agreement, containing a "General Program" (maximum) and an immediate program, revealed the reformist and Stalinist character of this "Front".

"In accordance with the needs of this situation and in response to this mass urge, the Ceylon Communist Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna have agreed to form a United Left Front in order to mobilise and lead all anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and socialist forces in Ceylon in the fight to establish a government that will give effect to the following general program."

The "immediate" or the minimum part of this program, which was the real program of the Front, speaks for itself. The following are among the demands of the "immediate" or minimum program: (a) Bring down Prices! Let the State import and undertake the wholesale trade in all essential commodities. (b) End the wage freeze! Political and trade union rights for teachers and other employees of the Government.... (c) Participation of workers in each work place in the management of state and nationalised undertakings. (d) Nationalise the 13 Foreign Banks!

Revolutionary Tendency

The minority in the Central Committee (14 members), that had for some time been moving in a revolutionary orientation, were categorically opposed to the so-called United Left Front.

The minority (which included Meryl [Fernando], Edmund [Samarakody], Karlo [Karalasingham], [Bala] Tampoe, D.S. Mallawaratchi, S.A. Martinus, W. Dharmasena) was quick to see the reformist nature of this ULF which it correctly characterised as popular frontism!

"The situation which now faces the party is one in which it is clear that the MEP and the CP are not contemplating the type of United Front activity that will in fact provide a united left lead to the masses against the SLFP government and the forces of capitalist reaction.

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These two parties are seeking instead, to secure the party's consent to putting forward an agreed governmental program before the masses in the name of the United Left Front for the purpose of canvassing support for the establishment of a popular front type of government in parliament. This parliamentary reformist perspective for united front activity must be rejected by the party....

".... The party must avoid any course of action which is likely to strengthen the illusions already created amongst the left minded masses that the road forward to socialism in Ceylon lies through the setting up of a United Left Front with the objective of establishing a coalition government in parliament, on the basis of any agreed program for that purpose."

(Resolution of the CC minority)

With the emergence of a revolutionary tendency led by 14 members of the Central Committee, the time was opportune to begin in an organised manner the struggle against parliamentarism and reformism and for orienting the party in a revolutionary direction. And this was clearly the moment for the International Secretariat to come down decisively on the side of the CC minority, for a joint struggle for the building of the revolutionary party.

It was thus that the CC minority looked forward hopefully for support from the Mandels and the Pierre Franks, especially when the International Secretariat had once again, in the fall of 1961, reminded the LSSP leaders that it was urgent for the party to be re-oriented on the lines suggested by the I.S. and endorsed by the Sixth World Congress. By its August (1961) resolution on Ceylon, the I.S. reiterated the following matters.

(a) "The impossibility of the conquest of power by the parliamentary way and the necessity for never forgetting that the smashing of the bourgeois apparatus and the creation by the masses in the course of a revolutionary process as a whole, of new organs of power, remain the condition for the victory of the proletariat and its revolutionary party";

(b) "The necessity of working to make possible a close alliance between the worker masses and the peasants and more particularly for the operation of the real junction with the Indian agricultural workers, who remain one of the motive forces of the revolution in Ceylon; the necessity to underline the principled attitude favourable to trade union unity."

(c) The International Secretariat even reminded the LSSP leadership that "up till now,

the conference of the LSSP, which should have discussed all these questions, has not been convoked and there is consequently no official stand of the party."

All this and the initial reactions of the International Secretariat to the parliamentarism that was reflected through the first draft of the ULF agreement gave promise of principled positions in this regard by the Mandels and the Pierre Franks, especially in the context of the categorical opposition of the CC minority (14 members out of 44).

But it was just when the CC minority looked to cooperation from the Mandels and Pierre Franks to continue their struggle against the LSSP reformists that they were abandoned by these leaders who took the side of the N.M. Pereras and Leslies when the latter signed the so-called agreement of the United Left Front which was nothing but a modest programme of reforms to fight the next parliamentary elections in the perspective of forming a joint government in parliament. The I.S. issued a public statement hailing the formation of the LSSP-MEP-CP "Left United Front."

Was the International Secretariat correct in supporting the United Left Front formed in August 1963? What was their justification in this regard? Were they acting in accordance with the general program of Trotskyism?

Workers and Peasants Government

The call of the Bolsheviks in 1917 for a government of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and their readiness to designate such a government as a workers and peasants government has been the excuse for revisionists of the United Secretariat and of the Healyite variety to call for support of governments of reformist working-class parties and petty-bourgeois parties, which are nothing but governments for bourgeois reform. And this was precisely the orientation of the Mandels and the Pierre Franks, especially since the 3rd Congress (1951).

Here is for example the section of the resolution of the 3rd Congress in regard to the tactics concretely proposed for Chile:

"It [our section] will develop its propaganda for the slogan of the workers and peasants government which will eventually be concretised in this country as a government of parties claiming to represent the working class, notably the Communist Party and the Socialist Party." (This meant that the coalition government of Allende that was recently overthrown by the military coup was the con-

cretisation of the slogan workers and peasants government!)

And this was specifically the advice of the I.S. to the LSSP when these leaders intervened with the party in 1960 against their proposal to support an SLFP government in that year.

"It would be rather dangerous, however for the workers parties to restrict themselves to the framework of the parliamentary aims and not look for a new, effective contact with the masses, through vigorous, extra-parliamentary activity among the worker and peasant masses; and at an electoral policy which puts forward a radical program to be realised by the United Front of the parties which claim to be working class." [our emphasis—E.S.]

(I.S. Document on Ceylon, 18 May 1960)

But it is precisely against this reformist interpretation of the Bolshevik experience that Trotsky himself had warned.

Trotsky mentions the specific conditions under which the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan to the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks—"break with the bourgeoisie and take power." Here are these specific conditions:

1. It was a slogan put forward during a particular phase in the pre-revolutionary situation of 1917—the period from April to September 1917.

2. In this context "the Bolshevik party promised the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s, as the petty-bourgeois representatives of the workers and peasants, its revolutionary aid against the bourgeoisie..."

3. The Bolshevik party categorically refused either to enter the government of the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s or to carry political responsibility for it.

4. In the specific context in which this slogan was projected "If the Mensheviks and the S.R.'s had actually broken with the Cadets (liberals) and with foreign imperialism, then 'the workers' and peasants' government' created by them could only have hastened and facilitated the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat."¹⁵

The Transitional Programme (of the 4th International) left no room for any misunderstanding in regard to this slogan—"This formula, 'Workers and Peasants Government,' first appeared in the agitation of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and was definitely accepted after the October Insurrection. In the final instance it represented nothing more than the popular

designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat.

"...The slogan 'Workers and Farmers Government' is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks—i.e., as an anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist slogan, but in no case in that democratic sense which later the epigones gave it, transforming it from a bridge to socialist revolution into the chief barrier upon its path."

The International Secretariat was completely wrong in regard to the so-called tactics of forming governments of working-class based parties and other petty-bourgeois parties which they proposed for the backward countries in 1951 (3rd Congress) and specifically to the LSSP in 1960 and when they gave their sanction to the United Left Front in August 1963. And it is this wrong policy that the U.Sec. as well as the Healyites continue to follow up to the present.

The Coalition Government

From the United Left Front (LSSP-MEP-CP Coalition) to an SLFP-LSSP coalition was but a step. And this happened in June 1964. Of course the Mandels and the Pierre Franks were frantically wringing their hands when N.M. Perera took the lead to make this proposal. And this time "Barkis was willing." The bourgeois SLFP government was in crisis and conditions were maturing for massive working-class action against the government at a time when its ranks were depleting. Sirima Bandaranaike needed a coalition with the strongest working-class based party. The SLFP leader readily agreed to form a coalition government with the LSSP which was ready to betray the working class and the toilers.

The revolutionary tendency categorically opposed coalition and denounced it as betrayal. However, even at this eleventh hour, the I.S. failed to establish direct contact with the revolutionary tendency led by the CC opposition of 14 members to jointly fight the reformists in this struggle. Instead, the I.S. sent a letter to the Secretary, Leslie Gunawardena, the contents of which were known to the minority and the party only on the day of the National Conference to decide on coalition.

Nor did the arrival of Pierre Frank, the U.Sec. representative, one day before the Conference, give any added strength to the revolutionary tendency that had through its own efforts organised for the final confrontation. And what is more, when the revolutionary tendency informed Pierre Frank that the coalitionists

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¹⁵ L.D. Trotsky, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International (The Transitional Program)," 1938.

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were certain to win at conference and that the only course of action that appeared to the minority as correct was the split from the coalitionists on this issue, the representative of the I.S. had no views to offer. His only words were — "that is for you to decide!" Thus, contrary to the claims of the I.S., its representative would not even associate himself with the decision of the revolutionary tendency to break with N.M. Perera, Colvin [R. de Silva] and Leslie [Gunawardena] when they took the road of open betrayal and when they struck a frontal blow at the World Trotskyist movement. Of course, later, the I.S. expelled the coalitionists from the International and recognised the LSSP(R) as its Ceylon section.

LSSP (R)

The task before the LSSP(R) was to draw up a full balance sheet of the whole of the LSSP experience and on the basis of these lessons to begin the building of the revolutionary party.

But, from the outset, the contradictions within itself made it impossible for the LSSP(R) to undertake any systematic efforts at party building. And the truth about the opposition that split from the LSSP in June 1964 was that there were four groups.

Karalasingham Group

A basic contradiction in the LSSP(R) arose from the Karalasingham group.

Within the left opposition in the LSSP prior to the split Karalasingham gave promise of playing an important role in the struggle against revisionism and for the building of the revolutionary party. Karalasingham intervened sharply against the coalition line of the LSSP leaders. In his pamphlet for the special conference, which later he included in his book on "Coalition Politics," Karalasingham effectively exposed the revisionism of the LSSP leaders especially by reference to Marxist theory and experience.

Significantly, however, from the outset Karalasingham stood categorically opposed to a split of the left oppositionists in the event of the acceptance of coalition by the party at special conference. Karalasingham did not clarify his perspectives for remaining within the LSSP in such a situation. And, on the other hand, he was vehemently opposed to any attempt to even form a faction when this was mooted

about by some of those in left-opposition long before the proposal of coalition was made by the N.M. Perera group. And undoubtedly, the failure to organize a faction by the revolutionary tendency on a platform, which would have brought out clearly the differences among the oppositionists, was the most serious mistake of those who sought to fight the revisionism of the LSSP leaders.¹⁶

Despite his orientation in this regard, Karalasingham, though reluctantly, joined the left-oppositionists who organised themselves as the LSSP(R). Karalasingham did not reveal his perspectives in regard to his decision to be in the LSSP(R).

But it was not long before Karalasingham's motivation became manifest. In December 1964 the two party (LSSP-R) M.P.'s made a tactical mistake on the issue of the voting on the Throne Speech of the Coalition government.¹⁷ Voting against the government on this issue was not the mistake. The LSSP(R) CC had rightly taken a decision to vote against the Throne Speech. Their mistake was that they voted on the motion of the Independent (rightist) Member Dahanayake. As a result, the party was exposed to the attacks of the coalitionists, who alleged that the LSSP(R) M.P.'s joined the UNP and the rightists to defeat the government. That was the gravamen of the charge that could justifiably be leveled against them.

However, Karalasingham took the opportunity to launch an attack, not on the tactical question but on the question of the principal position of the party, that is the opposition to coalition politics. Without specifically stating so, Karalasingham developed his attack on the independent existence of the LSSP(R). His first move was to call for the defeat of the UNP in the election that was due (March 1965). He further proposed that the party call for support of Sirima Bandaranaike, SLFP leader, in her constituency. The next step was the organisation of a pro-coalitionist faction—the "Sakthi group"—which published a paper, which in direct opposition to the party line called for support publicly for a SLFP-LSSP government, to replace the UNP government that was elected in the March 1965 elections.

With the Healy group also supporting the Karalasingham-led "Sakthi" group, it was no

¹⁶ The Throne Speech, given by the prime minister, presents the government program at the beginning of a parliamentary term. The vote cast by a party on the Throne Speech is an important indication of that party's attitude toward the government.

easy task for the revolutionary tendency to fight successfully these revisionists, especially in the context of the U.Sec.'s calling for tolerance for this group. Mandel disagreed with the Provisional Committee of the LSSP(R) when it expelled two of the Karalasingham coalitionists who were responsible for the "Sakthi" paper and were not ready to admit that they had violated party discipline.

That Karalasingham's perspective when he participated in the organisation of the LSSP(R) was none other than the betrayal of the left-oppositionists to the LSSP coalitionists received confirmation in his virtual confessions in the introduction to his book "Senile Leftism—A reply to Edmund Samarakkody," which he produced as a passport to enter his "parental" party, the reformist LSSP. In a denunciation of the leaders of the LSSP(R) for their decision to split from the reformists, Karalasingham contended that "without reference to the process that was in motion within the LSSP, without regard to the consciousness and thinking of the advanced elements in the mass movement behind the LSSP and ignoring the deep divisions in their own ranks between the United Secretariat and the Healy caucus, they arbitrarily proclaimed themselves a new party." Thus Karalasingham's motivation for being one of the mid-wives of the "new party," was to strangle it at its birth!

While Karalasingham sought to say that the split in 1964 was too premature and that he had a perspective of fighting the coalitionists from within, his real orientation was revealed in the very next paragraph: "The political tendency to which the writer belongs has decided to re-join the parent organisation." So it was a case

of the prodigal son returning to the parental home not to continue his feud with the parents but to ask their forgiveness for his own past sins and to remain a loyal member of the parental home!

Nor did Karalasingham fail to give the "misguided" or "senile leftists" of the LSSP(R) the benefit of his superior understanding of Leninism-Trotskyism: "Equally important political considerations have made this necessary." He then quotes from the *Sakthi* which he claimed as his factional paper...

"But between the regime of imperialism and the compradore bourgeoisie which exists today and the definite regime of the dictatorship of the working-class, it is likely that there would be a sequence of intermediate regimes initially reflecting the very backwardness, and subsequently in consequence of the growing political maturity of the masses, representative of the more advanced elements. Whatever be the manner of the down fall of the UNP government, so long as it is the result of the new mass uprising, it can be stated that its successor would be the government of the SLFP-LSSP coalition. The untimely defeat of the coalition, and that too at the hands of the class enemy of the working-class, has placed a coalition government of this type on the order of the day.

"But genuine revolutionaries, far from being dismayed by such a development—viz: that a SLFP-LSSP coalition should replace the UNP's national government, would do everything to facilitate its formation...."

"Therefore," concluded Karalasingham, "the place of all serious revolutionaries today is in the LSSP, so that in participating fully in the task ahead they could intervene energetically, when the inevitable class differentiation of the mass movement takes place."

Karalasingham thus unmasked himself. This is nothing else than the Stalinist "two-stage theory" with the projection of the transitional regimes of coalition with the so-called national or liberal bourgeoisie. With the tradition of LSSP opposition to this so-called theory of the Stalinists, the N.M.'s [Perera] and the Leslies [Gunawardena] and now Karalasingham could not give this designation to their "theory" and acknowledge Joseph Stalin as their "Marxist" mentor. But in any event now, the hollowness of Karalasingham's claims to Marxist theory, his audacity in invoking the authority of Lenin and Trotsky in his attempt to mask his reformism and his unbreakable links with coalition politics and revisionism, stood exposed.

But even this complete unmasking of himself by Karalasingham did not prevent the Mandels and Franks from inviting him to par-

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THE TIMES OF CEYLON

Philip Gunawardena, S.A. Wickremasinghe (CP) and N.M. Perera in 1963.

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participate in the 9th World Congress in 1968, several months after he had been re-admitted to the reformist LSSP!

Tampoe Group

The CMU¹⁷ leader Tampoe showed no interest in the building of a revolutionary leadership. His main preoccupation was the building of himself as a trade-union leader whilst talking "revolution." What Tampoe wanted was to use the LSSP(R) to give himself a coloration as a revolutionary trade-union leader. And in his trade union he was the boss who maintained excellent relations with the employers, mainly the imperialist agency houses, while staging "token strikes" with the usual demonstrations and public meetings, at which Tampoe was invariably the only speaker.

Trotskyists in Ceylon could not hope to take even the first steps in the task of building the revolutionary leadership without, among other matters, effecting a sharp break with the trade-union reformist politics which was a heritage from the LSSP. In fact Tampoe's break with the LSSP was to free himself for closer relations with the employers and with all bourgeois governments including the UNP for concessions for workers in the CMU.

And it was Tampoe's rightist trade-union politics that led him to oppose, in the Provisional Committee of the LSSP(R), the proposal to develop the struggle against the UNP government on the concrete issues of the declaration of state of emergency (1966) and the police shooting, the victimization of workers for the strike (communal) led by the coalitionists, the cut in the rice ration in the latter part of the year followed by the devaluation of the rupee at the dictates of the IMF.

Tampoe even supported the declaration of the state of emergency (January 1966) in a letter he sent to Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake. Tampoe opposed joint (united-front) action with other trade unions against the UNP

government on the issue of the victimization of the workers after the January 8 (1966) strike.

However, the Tampoe group maintained friendly relations with both the Karlo [Karalasingham] coalitionist group and with the Healyites. Healy's special envoy, Mike Banda, paid several visits to Ceylon in his attempt to win over Tampoe to Healy. The SLI press gave Tampoe headline publicity for his two-hour token strikes which he called out on chosen occasions.

The break away of Karlo coalitionists from the LSSP(R) found the revolutionary tendency (Meryl [Fernando], D.S. Mallawaratchi, [Tulsiri] Andrade, Edmund [Samarakody]) opposed by the Tampoe-Healyite alliance. Their common objective was to oust the revolutionary tendency from its position of leadership within the LSSP(R). And with regard to the Healyites, disruption of the LSSP(R) and not the building of a revolutionary party, was their chief preoccupation.

Despite the efforts of the unprincipled Tampoe-Healyite combination to disrupt the LSSP(R) there was a real possibility for the revolutionary tendency to win against these opportunists and rightists, but for the part played by Mandel and the leaders of the United Secretariat.

As previously, Mandel followed his policy of conciliationism, at first with the Karlo coalitionists, and thereafter with the rightist trade-union leader Tampoe whose 30,000 strong CMU and token strikes and demonstrations could provide occasional headline news of "Trotskyist militant struggles in Ceylon" in the journals of the United Secretariat.

It was thus that Mandel and the leaders of the United Secretariat closed their eyes to the politics of the split in 1968 of the RSP (now RWP)¹⁸ from the Tampoe-led LSSP(R) and adopted the Tampoe group as the Ceylon section of the United Secretariat, despite the fact that a commission appointed at the open sessions of the 9th World Congress unanimously condemned the politics of Tampoe.¹⁹ Here are some relevant extracts of this report:

"The Commission felt that some of the actions

¹⁷The Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU) is a medium-sized union of government employees, white collar workers and miscellaneous other office employees. Led by Bala Tampoe of the LSSP(R), it was one of the few important unions standing outside the federations led by the by-now thoroughly reformist LSSP and pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Stalinists.

¹⁸The Revolutionary Samasamaja Party (RSP), which at a convention in late 1972 changed its name to the Revolutionary Workers Party (RWP).

¹⁹For further information on the attempted cover-up of the Tampoe scandal by the U.Sec. see "The Case of Bala Tampoe" in *Spartacist* No. 21, Fall 1972.

and policies of Com. Bala [Tampoe] and the LSSP(R) brought to our notice by Com. Edmund, and not denied by Com. Bala, could have seriously damaged the reputation of Com. Bala as a revolutionary leader, compromised the Fourth International in Ceylon and have been exploited by all the enemies of our movement....

"The evidence placed before the Commission tends to support the conclusion that the policies followed by Com. Bala, especially in his dual role as CMU Secretary and as LSSP(R) Secretary were gravely compromising to the 4th International. The Commission was not in a position to get a clear enough picture of the policies of Com. Bala in the concrete circumstances of Ceylon and the LSSP(R) to propose that this section be disaffiliated by the World Congress. But we strongly feel the need for the further investigation of this matter."

Despite this devastating condemnation of Tampoe and his politics unanimously by its own Commission, the 9th World Congress, which was manipulated throughout by the bureaucratic leaders—the Mandels, Franks and the Livios—accepted Tampoe's group as the Ceylon Section and decided to file the report of the Ceylon Commission! Incidentally, for alleged security reasons, the leaders of the United Secretariat decided to abruptly end the Conference allowing only a half hour (!) to the discussion of the Ceylon question.

It was clearly not possible for the Mandels, Pierre Franks, the Livios and the Hansens to reconcile their acceptance of the Tampoe group as their Ceylon section with their claim to be Leninists-Trotskyists. And that is why they used one "Vitarne" as their tool to "dispose of" the question by merely denying that there was any Commission at all on the Ceylon question at the 9th Congress. For, if there was no Commission there could not be a report to talk about! But it is relevant in this regard to ask why the leadership of the U.Sec. (Mandel, Pierre Frank, Livio and Hansen) allowed a person who was not a member of the Fourth International, a mere observer and an outsider, who

had been invited among several such persons to this Congress, to report on the truth of what took place at the 9th World Congress in regard to the Ceylon question and the Tampoe group. We are certain that this question will remain unanswered by the leaders of the United Secretariat.

Tampoe Group Since 1969

The orientation of the United Secretariat as manifested in the documents and decisions of the 9th Congress, and Tampoe's real aims left no future for the Tampoe group to develop as a viable political formation whether linked to the right-opportunist wing led by the Hansens and Novacks or the ultra-left opportunist wing led by the Livios, Mandels and Franks of the U.Sec.

The question has been and remains—"who is using whom?" Is it the case that the Mandel wing of the U.Sec. is using Tampoe to further their aims—i.e. to have a large trade union in Ceylon, through whose boss Tampoe, to get the United Secretariat an appearance of a strong base, though in reality without substance; or is it that Tampoe is using the Mandels, Franks and Livios to further his own interests as a trade-union boss-type leader?

The reality is that there is no political party or even a group that functions independently as the LSSP(R). The LSSP(R) has no political activity to its credit ever since the RSP split in 1969. It has long ago ceased to publish even an occasional newspaper.

With the rise of the JVP²⁰ youth movement Tampoe, apparently with the approval of the Mandels, sought to opportunistically associate with Rohana Wijeweera²¹ and other leaders who were visibly growing in popularity. In order to win a place for himself at a time when this movement did not give any indications of preparing any confrontation with the coalition government, Tampoe rushed to befriend them in the courts during the first days of police action

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²⁰ The Janatha Vikramuthi Peramuna (JVP—Peoples Liberation Front), a Guevarist organization of student and peasant youth, led a large-scale youth revolt in the Sinhalese rural areas in the spring of 1971 which was directed against the coalition government of the SLFP, LSSP and CP (Moscow). In a remarkable demonstration of counterrevolutionary solidarity, the government was aided by the U.S., Britain, the USSR, India, Pakistan and Egypt, while China gave its explicit political endorsement of the bloody repression of the uprising!

²¹ Wijeweera is a former member of the pro-

Moscow CP who had begun organizing the JVP in 1966, building a large following among university students and unemployed graduates. His own politics were essentially "insurrectionary Stalinism" of the Guevarist type. As Comrade Samarakkody noted in "Politics of Deceit," "... the JVP had completely discounted the plantation workers (largely of Indian Tamil origin) and that it did not have any position on the burning question of the Tamil minority—their language and other rights. ... Sinhalese chauvinism was clearly evident in their politics."

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against them. Tampoe even went so far as to give a certificate to Wijeweera that he was no communalist and that he was a true Marxist, when he knew well that ex-Stalinist Rohana Wijeweera was consciously seeking to win over the Sinhalese petty bourgeois through his talk of the need to fight so-called Indian expansionism.

However, when the police were hot on the trails of the JVP, Tampoe judiciously moved away from the JVP and took a vow of silence during the period. And when the murderous campaign of the government against the youth was on, during which thousands were killed by shooting or torture, Tampoe had lost his voice. While within the first week of this campaign against the youth the RSP (now RWP) unequivocally condemned the actions of the government, demanded the end to killings and torture, and also invited the trade unions including the CMU to communicate their views in this regard, Tampoe continued to remain silent.

However, when it appeared quite safe, Tampoe very late in the day appealed to the Prime Minister that "it would be an act of inhumanity for you to order a concerted military offensive by the armed services against the insurgents," etc.

And, as it happens in periods of crisis, it was not easy for Tampoe to indulge even in tilting at wind-mills especially under emergency conditions. It was thus that Tampoe did not move a finger during the 100-day strike of the bank clerks, led by the Bank Employees Union, whose leader was Oscar Perera, a member of the LSSP(R). Tampoe failed to take the initiative to get trade-union action in support of this strike. He only reluctantly participated in a joint trade-union meeting organised on the initiative of the RSP (now RWP) leader Tulsiri Andrade of the Central Bank Union. He thereafter washed his hands of this strike and silently watched this strike being smashed by the coalition government supported especially by the LSSP!

Healy Group

Having kept aloof from the politics of the LSSP from the time of the 1953 split of the International, the leader of the so-called International Committee and of the SLL, Gerry Healy, parachuted himself into the Ceylon scene in June 1964. Having arrived in the same plane with Pierre Frank a day before the LSSP con-

ference, Healy, who had a few followers in the LSSP opposition, sought to gate-crash into the conference hall of the LSSP. Of course, he was not permitted to enter.

What Healy's politics were in relation to the issues at the conference was unknown. Nor did he seek to place his views before the LSSP membership through documentation prior to the conference. Instead, what he sought to do was to take the left opposition into the fold of the International Committee by disruption.

It was this same line of disruption that his followers—Prins Rajasooriya (now with Tampoe), Sydney Wanasinghe (now with the LSSP coalitionists), Wilfred Perera and R.S. Baghavan pursued. It was thus that the Healy group gave full co-operation to the Karlo coalitionists to fight the revolutionary tendency. In fact, a section of the Healy group actively participated in the organisation of the Karlo faction, "the Sakthi group," which in their factional paper publicly called for the support of a coalition government.

Nor were the Healyites strange-bed-fellows with the Karlo coalitionists. While denouncing the Mandels and the Franks for the betrayal of the LSSP leaders, and while also denouncing the [Edmund] Samarakody-Meryl Fernando group for advocating united-front action to include the coalition trade unions against the victimisation by the UNP government, the local Healyite "theoretician" Wilfred Perera was in fact pursuing coalition politics.

Here is a sample of Wilfred Perera's theory which he put out in 1967 during the UNP regime.

"We should propose to the rank and file of the left parties [referring to LSSP and CP] and of the trade-unions under their control to bring pressure on the Left party leaders to demand—

"1. a revision of the Joint Program [coalition program] so as to include working-class demands and socialist measures [...], and that the demands should be formulated by a united front of the trade-unions. And we should make our own proposal regarding the demands;

"2. a more equitable apportionment of the parliamentary seats for the next election, say on a 50-50 basis as between the SLFP and the left parties.

"The first demand will show how far Mrs. Bandaranaike is prepared to go towards socialism, and at the same time expose the impotence of the left fakers to push her leftwards. The second will show how sincere Mrs. Bandaranaike is when she says she needs the co-operation of the working-class to defeat the UNP-led coalition."

Advocating coalition politics could not be more

explicit than this!

In this "theory" Wilfred Perera left the road open to a link up with Tampoe whose syndicalism he correctly denounced in an earlier part of the same document.

It was the contention of the Healy "theoretician" that they supported the resolution of the Tampoe group (1967 Conference) as against the Samarakkody group in order to "save" the party from the pro-coalition line of the latter! That was Wilfred Perera's justification for supporting the syndicalism of Tampoe, which he explained as the meaning of his (Tampoe's) line of "unification of the working-class under its own independent class banner": "We see here," wrote Wilfred Perera, "the illusions fostered by a blind faith in trade-union militancy without political perspectives and, a lack of understanding of the political issues involved."

But here is a sample of Wilfred Perera's own syndicalism cum coalition politics in this same document:

"The left fakers say they can achieve socialism by parliamentary means. Let them prove it by breaking their ties with the SLFP which are hindering them and make a bid for governmental power on their own and on a working-class program which the trade-unions will jointly formulate. In place of the coalition program we will propose a trade-union joint program" [!].

Healy Group Since the Split

Having helped the Tampoe rightists to defeat the revolutionary tendency at the 1968 (April) Conference, which led to the split away of the latter tendency and the formation of the RSP (now RWP), the Healy group found its task in the LSSP(R) was over. Without any explanation for their conduct the Healyites led by Wilfred Perera broke away from Tampoe, whom they had helped to install as leader of the LSSP(R).

Claiming that the mantle of Trotskyism had fallen on them, the Healyites announced their separate organisation, the Revolutionary Socialist League.

From the outset however, the policies and practice of this league were at variance and in conflict with the program of Trotskyism. Whilst their reputed leader Healy, of the so-called International Committee, continues to rightly castigate the Mandels and the Pierre Franks for their responsibility for the LSSP debacle, the RSL (the Ceylon Unit of this Healyite IC) called for and supported the SLFP-LSSP-CP coalition in the elections of May 1970, the outcome of which was the present SLFP-led coalition government.

The Healyites were thus consistent with their policy within the LSSP(R), when they compacted with the Karalasingham-led coalitionists, who in their factional paper "Sakthi" called for support of the SLFP-LSSP-CP coalition. However, the RSL suddenly somersaulted. About two months after the coalition government was formed (May 1970), when sections of the masses that supported these parties were expressing their disappointment at the policies of the government, the Healy group announced that they had made a mistake when they supported the coalition at the elections.

The new line of the Healyites, which they claimed was in accordance with Leninism-Trotskyism, is their call to the LSSP and CP to break away from the coalition and form a government. Of course, they had with them the history book of the Russian revolution. Apparently, with confidence, they referred to the Bolshevik experience in 1917, when in the special conditions and in the context of a revolutionary situation, Lenin called upon the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries to break with the bourgeoisie and take the power.

But in the hands of the Healyites it was a complete misapplication of the Bolshevik tactic. The concretisation of the slogan "workers and farmers government" through a government of the LSSP and CP is a farcical concept apart from the disorientation that such a slogan must lead to. There is no revolutionary or pre-revolutionary situation in Ceylon. It is not possible today to attempt a concretisation of the slogan workers and peasants government, that is, to indicate which organisation of the working class and toilers could constitute the new power or government.

On the contrary, the consciousness of the masses is at a stage when they are only seriously dissatisfied and disappointed with the coalition government. Of course sections of these masses are moving into opposition against the government without any perspectives yet of any struggle against this government. The working class, whose living standards are being systematically attacked by the coalition government, has not yet launched any large-scale trade-union action against the policies of this government. In fact, in the absence of a revolutionary party, with influence among the working class, it is possible that the masses including sections of the working class could well move in a rightist direction.

What is imperative today is to help the working class and toilers to understand that the blows struck against their living standards

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are the result of the treacherous politics of coalition—i.e. of the LSSP and CP betrayers. Those claiming to be Trotskyists cannot conceive of helping to create further illusions that the way forward is a labour government of the LSSP-CP which must necessarily be reformist in character. But this is just what the Healyite slogan does.

And, in regard to this slogan, it is necessary once more to state what Trotsky himself categorically stated—"The slogan 'workers and farmers government' is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks, i.e., as an anti-bourgeois and anti-capitalist slogan, but in no case in that 'democratic' sense which later the epigones gave it, transforming it from a bridge to socialist revolution into the chief barrier upon its path."

Struggle for Trotskyism Today

Having participated in the left opposition (1962) as consistent oppositionists to the coalition and reformist politics of the LSSP leaders who betrayed the party, having continued the struggle against the Karalasingham coalitionists in the LSSP(R), having successfully faced the combined opposition of the Healyites and Tampoe, who was supported by the Pabloist United Secretariat, the revolutionary tendency that separated from these centrists, and which re-grouped itself as the Revolutionary Samasamaja Party, is today reorganised as the Revolutionary Workers Party.

During the first two years the revolutionary tendency had the task of drawing up a proper balance sheet of the experience of the LSSP and the LSSP(R) and to cleanse itself of the hangovers of Pabloism, which substituted empiricism and pragmatism for dialectical materialism and which abandoned the task of building the revolutionary party to the participation and "integration" in the so-called living movement of the masses, leading the Pabloites to parliamentarism and syndicalism. The Revolutionary Workers Party cannot but reject the politics of both wings of the United Secretariat—the ultra-left opportunist mixture of Mandel, Livio, Frank, as well as the opportunist group of Hansen-Novack.

While seeking to participate with its co-thinkers in the unpostponable task of regrouping of the Trotskyists in other countries in the perspective of contributing to the re-

building of the revolutionary International, the Revolutionary Workers Party is bending its energies to the construction of the Trotskyist party in Ceylon on the firm foundations of the Transitional Program of the Fourth International and the relevant programmatic documents that remain the heritage of the Leninist-Trotskyist movement.

Present Situation

Objective conditions today are more favourable than ever before for the development of mass struggle for the overthrow of capitalist class rule in Ceylon and for the establishment of socialism.

World capitalism has entered into a new period of decline, reflected for a long time now in economic recessions in advanced capitalist countries, leading to fierce inter-imperialist rivalry, which has driven the capitalist class in each country to impose severe burdens on the workers and the wage earners in these countries.

For nearly a decade now the organised working class in these advanced countries has been engaged in wage struggles to defend their living standards. The French working class showed in their now famous struggle (1968) the revolutionary potentialities of the proletariat in these advanced capitalist countries.

An aspect of this new phase of decline of capitalism on a world scale is that Ceylon and other backward countries are more intensely exploited by imperialism in numerous ways. The economies in these countries, ruled invariably by the bonapartist "national" bourgeois regimes, face deepening crises, manifested by unbalanced budgets and serious lack of foreign exchange to pay for necessary imports, leading to increased burdens on the workers and toilers. The masses in these countries, despite the betrayals of the Stalinists, reformists and centrists, must sooner or later move on to the road of struggle.

Three years of the SLFP-LSSP-CP coalition government have brought unprecedented suffering to the working class and all the toilers. While extending the state sector without any real encroachment on the private capitalists, while appearing to strike blows at the capitalists and imperialists, the government is desperately seeking to maintain the profit levels of these very same capitalists and imperialists, at the dictates of the IMF.

In this perspective, this government adopted a policy of severe restriction of consumer imports and has even totally banned the imports of a large number of essential food imports,

which has led to serious inflation. Also, at the dictates of the IMF, the government is implementing a virtual wage freeze. And since the April youth armed struggle, a state of emergency continues and strikes are virtually banned. The repressive apparatus of the State has been strengthened in an unprecedented manner.

The reality today, especially with the newest blows struck at the masses by further cuts in rationed rice, flour and sugar, and also by further increase of the price of these and numerous other commodities, is that the government is facing increasing unpopularity. This means, that from now on, sections of the masses who supported and identified themselves with the government will inevitably move away from the coalition parties and the government. There is now a real possibility of developing mass opposition leading to mass action against the measures of the government and the government itself.

On the other hand, the rightist forces led by the UNP are even now growing as a result of the policies of the government, which have in an unprecedented way impoverished the masses and increased their misery.

Up to now the working class has been held down from pressing their demands in the perspective of trade-union action, principally by the LSSP and CP—the partners in coalition, on the pretext of the need for the workers to sacrifice and produce more for "Socialism."

While "sacrifice" was the key note of the LSSP propaganda, the CP (pro-Moscow) led by the [S.A.] Wickremasinghe wing had adopted, from the outset, more opportunistically, a critical stance in relation to the policies of the government which affected adversely the living standards of the workers and toilers.

With the severity of the government's measures against the masses, the CP(M) became more "critical" and called upon the government not to increase the burdens of the masses, but instead, to strike at the imperialists and to move on to more nationalisations.

The motivation of the CP(M), Wickremasinghe wing, was not to weaken the coalition but to gather the coalition masses around itself as the most "progressive" and "dynamic" force in the coalition. However, unexpectedly for the Wickremasinghe-led CP, despite its

expressions of continued loyalty, the coalition partners, SLFP and LSSP, in furtherance of the rightward course of their government, have shown them the door. This wing of the CP(M) has been expelled from the coalition government.

In response to the pressures of the rank and file of their trade unions, the bureaucratic leaders of the LSSP and the Keneuman wing of the CP(M) have sought to give themselves the appearance of being in readiness to lead the workers in struggle to defend their living standards. They have recently presented through the coalition trade union centre (JCTU) twenty-eight (28) demands to the employers and their own government.

The fraudulent nature of the moves of the LSSP trade-union leaders as well as both wings of the Stalinists (CP [Moscow]) already stands exposed by their defense of the coalition government in regard to the latest measures (October 1st cuts in rationed rice, flour and sugar with increase of prices). Far from seeking to mobilise the workers for struggle, they are vying with each other in calling upon the workers for further sacrifices in a so-called national food crisis.

In the plantation sector the two largest trade unions are the CWC (Ceylon Workers Congress—led by Thondaman) and CDC (Ceylon Democratic Congress—led by Aziz, allied to coalition). As an extreme right wing trade-union leader, who has affiliation with the U.S.-oriented ICFTU,²² Thondaman has been threatening to launch trade-union action to win the monthly wage demand for the plantation workers. However, Thondaman and some lesser union leaders allied to him have already abandoned all talk of strike action at the appeal of the Minister of Labour.

With regard to Tampoe, his usual fake fighting has been displayed now quite for some time. With the assistance of his centrist friends of the United Secretariat Tampoe obtained publicity in their journals for a "One-Day Hunger Strike" of workers in protest at the actions and policies of the government. In fact, during all this time, workers in a number of work places belonging to other non-coalition unions came out on strike despite the possibilities of government action against them. It was thus a

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²² The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), formed in December 1949 under the sponsorship of U.S. American Federation of Labor leaders, was a CIA-backed international center for anti-communist unions. The CIO immediately entered it, accept-

ing CIA funds in the process. Many of the ICFTU unions had earlier been part of the Stalinist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions and their split was one of the first steps of the "Cold War" launched by U.S. imperialism.

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false picture which Tampoe sought to paint, that where no one dared to call strikes under emergency conditions, he at least called a "Hunger Strike" of workers against the government! In fact, the journals of the United Secretariat had referred to a "Hunger Strike" of one million workers! But this so-called one-day hunger strike was farcical.

The response from vested interests was especially interesting. In its editorial comments of the *Ceylon Daily News* which congratulated Tampoe on this one-day non-violent "Hunger Strike," called upon him to continue longer this strike as Finance Minister N.M. Perera himself would readily approve in view of the worsening food situation in the country!

And Tampoe's reaction to the talk of presenting "twenty-eight demands" of the coalition unions was to call his usual "short leave" strike (2-hour strike) for a mass rally of the CMU at which he was the only speaker, and at which he called upon Ceylon's working class to abandon the coalition and other trade-union leaders and adopt the banner of the CMU!

Tampoe's political line in the present context is the same treacherous line of "Left Unity" that the LSSP and CP peddled before they finally adopted coalition with the SLFP. Tampoe has issued a call to "Re-Build the Left Movement" when what is imperative is to consistently and uncompromisingly expose the "Leftism" of the LSSP, of both wings of the CP(M), of the groups of the CP(Peking) and all other "left" fakers. It is the task of the revolutionary vanguard to expose the fraudulent politics of Tampoe which he continues in the name of Trotskyism.

The revolutionary vanguard has the task of exposing both the fraud of the CP(M) Wickremasinghe wing which continues to peddle coalition class-collaborationist politics and also the rightist course which the SLFP and LSSP are pursuing to please the vested interests, local and foreign.

It is necessary more especially to warn the working class that the coalition government is now moving, not to woo the working class, but to suppress and destroy the trade-union movement and all the organisations of the working class, which could well pave the way for a fully fledged military police regime.

It is clear that in the present state of the trade-union leadership, both of the pro-government coalition unions and of the so-called independent unions, the task of mobili-

sing the workers for united struggle against the government and the capitalist class is far from easy. Nevertheless, this remains the burning question for the working class today. This means it is the task of the revolutionary vanguard to begin now the struggle against the latest measures of the government and for other pressing demands of the workers and toilers including demands of a transitional character, in the teeth of the opposition of the bureaucratic trade-union leaders—of the coalition as well as of the so-called independent unions, including the Tampoe-led CMU.

In fact, in recent times anti-bureaucratic tendencies have appeared in many trade unions both pro-government and in others. In certain unions the anti-bureaucratic oppositions have succeeded in ousting the conservative and bureaucratic leaderships in such unions. This process could well grow.

The revolutionary vanguard, while taking active steps to root itself within the working class will fight for a program of demands which will include trade-union demands and also demands of a transitional character, e.g., nationalisation without compensation of the whole of the plantations, of manufacturing industries, workers control in all nationalised undertakings. It will also include demands for the withdrawal of the state of emergency and for the release of all political prisoners. In this regard the tradition of reformists and centrists has been to merely list transitional demands without seeking to develop any struggle around these demands.

It is in this perspective that the Revolutionary Workers Party is seeking today to intervene in the Ceylon situation. And it is not the futile and divisive policy of building new trade unions that is needed, but a policy of giving revolutionary perspective and bringing revolutionary politics to the advanced elements in the existing trade unions, by the building of political caucuses in them; that is the task.

This intervention by the Revolutionary Workers Party is necessarily limited by its present forces and resources. But it is to the extent that the Revolutionary Workers Party succeeds in intervening in the living working class and mass movement in a revolutionary perspective, and to the extent that it succeeds in carrying on an uncompromising and consistent struggle against Stalinism, Maoism and all forms of reformism and revisionism, whether of the United Secretariat variety or of the Healy variety, that it will be able to engage with success in the struggle for Trotskyism, for the building of the revolutionary leadership, i.e. the revolutionary party, in Ceylon. ■

USec Covers Up Tampoe Scandal

In the 19 March 1973 issue of *Intercontinental Press* (Vol. 11, No. 10) there appeared an article entitled "Ceylon and the Healy School of Falsification" by Jaya Vithana. It purports to be a defense against alleged slanders against Bala Tampoe (head of the Ceylon section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International") emanating from the Healyite press, i.e., a series of articles in the Socialist Labour League's *Workers Press* partially reprinted in the *Bulletin* of the U.S. Workers League. The Vithana article is a typical piece of revisionist obscurantism in which is concealed one giant lie: a denial of the legitimacy of documents of the *United Secretariat itself* which were reprinted originally, in *Spartacist* No. 21. As usual, the unprincipled organizational conduct of the Healyites provided the U.Sec Pabloists a convenient way to get themselves off the hook—almost.

Tampoe Unmasked by Spartacist

A bit of history is in order. Last year the Spartacist League drew the attention of the international working-class movement to the United Secretariat's shameless cover-up of a series of accusations brought against Bala Tampoe by its own supporters at the U.Sec.'s "Ninth World Congress" held in April 1969. In *Spartacist* No. 21 we published a majority report ("Ceylon Commission Report") and a minority report ("Indian Delegate's Report") from the Ceylon Commission of the "World Congress" as well as extracts from the official "World Congress" minutes which verified the fact of the Ceylon Commission while totally suppressing its content. These documents were made available to us by Edmund Samarakkody, a veteran Ceylonese socialist militant now associated with the RWP of Ceylon, at whose insistence the Ceylon Commission was convened. Comrade Samarakkody was at that time a member of the outgoing International Executive Committee of the U.Sec. We also published Comrade Samarakkody's letter to us authenticating the documents and explaining the events surrounding the Ceylon Commission at the "World Congress."

It is not surprising that the publication of these documents initiated a world-wide furor. The two reports came to somewhat different conclusions, but only over the question of what to do about Tampoe in the face of specific allegations whose reliability the Commission did not at any point call into question; Tampoe's acceptance of a trip to the U.S. in 1967 financed by the Asia Foundation; Tampoe's private

interview in Washington with McNamara; Tampoe's attendance at small social gatherings of imperialist diplomats; Tampoe's conduct as head of the Ceylon Mercantile Union.

The "World Congress" agreed on a series of recommendations which reaffirmed Tampoe's LSSP(R) as the Ceylon section but also called for the constituting of an investigative body as well as for the termination of Tampoe's dual function as head of both the CMU and the LSSP(R). (We have no information as to whether the former was ever carried out, but the latter certainly was not.) In our view, however, what made the Tampoe scandal important was not merely the unmasking of a politically corrupt individual posing as a Trotskyist, but the full complicity of the U.Sec., which published only the evasive recommendations of the Commission while suppressing the uncontested facts, as contained in the reports upon which the recommendations were based.

Healyites Muddy the Waters

Almost immediately upon publication of these documents in *Spartacist*, the political bandits of the Healy tendency rushed forward to try to claim the Tampoe scandal as their own "scoop." The Ceylon Commission reports and the extracts from the "World Congress" minutes filled the pages of *Workers Press*, along with sundry additional charges against Tampoe. The response of the U.Sec. and its American ally, the Socialist Workers Party, was predictable. Making full use of the Healyites' world-wide and well-deserved reputation for irresponsible slander and physical gangsterism, these revisionist cynics—well aware of the authenticity of the documents as well as of the fact that they had been first revealed in *Spartacist*, a publication well known for its scrupulous honesty and accuracy—sought to pass off their own "World Congress" reports as just another Healyite slander (see "Healyites Smear Bala Tampoe," *Intercontinental* (continued next page))

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Press, 20 November 1972). Faced with such a challenge, the Healyites were compelled to acknowledge the source of the material, trumpeting about Samarakkody's credentials and even once or twice mentioning *Spartacist*. But Healy had already played into the hands of the U.Sec., allowing the real evidence against Tampoe to be dismissed as coming from a tarnished source rather than from suppressed documents of Tampoe's collaborators, the U.Sec. itself.

Having once been given a handle, the Pabloists are understandably unwilling to let go. Their final smoke-screen, the Vithana article—which is apparently intended as the definitive response—devoted eight pages in *Intercontinental Press* to an all-out barrage. Vithana replied at length to various charges against the Ceylonese Pabloists emanating from the Healyites themselves (we must note in passing that there is no response at all to our accusations against Tampoe's conduct following the "World Congress" which were published in *Spartacist*, based on materials of the Ceylonese RWP, as part of an introduction to the U.Sec. documents) and he exposes, quite possibly accurately, the unprincipled conduct of the Ceylon Healyites. But concealed beneath all this is the essence of the U.Sec.'s response to the publication of the Ceylon Commission documents—a flat denial of their authenticity.

And the attempted bluff falls flat on its face. For

Vithana attempts to disprove too much.

Aware that the copies of the original Ceylon Commission reports were collected back from the participants, and thus that the only written proof they ever existed is the copies made by Comrade Samarakkody for his own use, Vithana begins by slandering Comrade Samarakkody and declaring these reports a fabrication:

"What is the 'evidence' against comrades Bala and others? It goes as follows: (1) Reports alleged to have been made by a 'commission' of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International... The first of these lies the Healyites borrowed from the Spartacists of the USA, who recently published a series of allegations against Comrade Bala Tampoe. They were made by Mr. Edmund Samarakkody..."

We must point out here Vithana's sleight-of-hand in attributing the "allegations" against Tampoe only to Samarakkody, whereas in fact his central accusations were verified and repeated in the reports of the Ceylon Commission published in *Spartacist*. Thus, in his impassioned denials of various "allegations" against Tampoe, Vithana waxes indignant about "slanders" by Comrade Samarakkody and the Spartacist League, but neglects to mention that these "slanders" were in fact the findings of the U.Sec.'s own Commission! It was the Ceylon Commission report, reprinted in *Spartacist*, which said:

"The Commission felt that some of the actions and policies of Comrade Bala and the LSSP(R) brought to our attention by Comrade Edmund and not denied by Comrade Bala could have seriously damaged the repu-

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

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July 1969

Contents

MINUTES OF THE THIRD CONGRESS SINCE REUNIFICATION
(Ninth World Congress)
April 1969

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retariat of the Fourth In-
ternational)

20 cents

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

leave the Congress without having fixed their monthly dues.
3. All bilateral financial arrangements with approval of the U.Sec. can only be made by the IBC, so that the IBC can start drafting the budget.

Discussion on Financial report:
Resolutions: Kuo, Davis, Andrew.

Liivo reported that the Argentine Com-
mission had not been able to meet.

Discussion: Juan.

Motion by Pedro: That the Argentine
Commission start now.

Motion carried.

II. REPORT FROM THE CEYLON COMMISSION by
Pete.

Motion from Ceylon Commission by
Pete.

1. That the leading bodies of the interna-
tional be instructed to appoint a small
investigating committee along the lines
mentioned above. This committee will sub-
mit a report of its findings and its rec-
ommendations for action to the next meet-
ing of the IBC.

2. That the IBC act with all possible
speed on the recommendations of this com-
mittee, including the full powers of a World
Congress, including the power to disaffili-
ate the LSSP(R) as the Ceylon section of
the Fourth International if it feels this
is the proper action.

3. That until the IBC decides otherwise,
the LSSP(R) remains the Ceylonese section
of the Fourth International, and there-
fore be given all possible assistance and
aid in its work by all bodies of the interna-
tional.

4. That the double function of Comrade
Bala as secretary of both the CFI and the
section be terminated as rapidly as pos-
sible.

5. The SSP would not be recognized as the
Ceylon section even were there not el-
sewhere recognized section in Ceylon.

6. Any necessary action in Ceylon
should be carried through by the Executive
Committee before and after the split.
We appeal to the SSP to grow the pro-
letarian movement in Ceylon.

7. That the IBC approve the pro-
posal to the Fourth International
of the recognized section, by re-
tracting the above-mentioned unaccept-
able proposal.

8. Upon Comrade Bala, his renunciation
of the LSSP(R) and its leadership, and
by this means prepare the eventual re-
grouping of the Trotskyist forces of Cey-
lon in a united section.

Motion by Pete: That Bala and Edmund
be given one-half hour to explain

their positions.

Motion carried.
Discussion on Ceylon Commission re-
port: Edmund, Bala, Pierre.

Motion by Pierre: That the only ques-
tion to be discussed is the recognition
of the Ceylon section.

Discussion.

Motion carried.

Continuation of discussion on Ceylon
Commission report: Walter, Abel.

Motion by Abel: That the International
at its next committee investigate with
the full power of the World Congress
the allegations of the Ceylon Com-
mission and that the International IBC
power to disaffiliate the Ceylon section
pending the results of the investigation.

Continuation of discussion on Ceylon
Commission report: Lewis, Walter, Abel.

Summary of Ceylon Commission report by
Pete.

Session adjourned for lunch.
Session reconvened.

Chairman: Corley.

Session reconvened.

Chairman: Corley.

Session reconvened.

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Chairman: Corley.

Session reconvened.

Chairman: Corley.

tation of Comrade Bala as a revolutionary leader.... In this context, we refer especially to the following examples:—(a) A series of incidents which together constitute compromisingly close relations between Comrade Bala and the Ceylonese embassies or missions of the imperialist countries...." (our emphasis)

It was the Indian Delegate's Report which said:

"Although Comrade Bala maintains that he had kept the United Secretariat and SWP informed about his trip, some of his activities in Washington like his interview with McNamara have not been fully explained."

It was the Ceylon Commission Report which, referring to "the subordination of the policies of the LSSP(R) to the union [Tampoe's CMU]," stated categorically that:

"...in none of these instances is there any evidence that the party took what the Commission considered a policy consistent with revolutionary Marxism."

Let Vithana and his U.Sec. colleagues try to squirm out of that with protestations about Spartacist League "slanders"!

Giant Bluff Fails

Short of taking decisive and immediate action to oust Tampoe as a renegade and an individual demonstrably unfit to be a leader of even the revisionist U.Sec.—a course the U.Sec. rejected when it suppressed the content of the reports themselves—the only alternative remaining for these fake-Trotskyists was to invoke the deservedly foul reputation of the Healyites, sling mud wildly at Samarakkody and the Spartacist League and deny everything. This was the thankless task which fell to Vithana. Accordingly, he writes: "Was there such a report as Healy and his friends claim? In fact Mr. Samarakkody claims that there are two such reports, a minority and a majority report. In fact the USFI appointed no such commission. Nor is there such a report or reports." (our emphasis)

Vithana has overreached himself. Had he confined himself to the one enormous lie that there were not reports, the issue might have to be judged—as many issues must be judged in real political life—solely on the basis of political logic and the reputation and record of the contending parties. Were this the case,

we would have to point out again such corroborating evidence as the fact that the operational conclusions of the majority report as published in *Spartacist* are identical to the five recommendations of the Ceylon Commission as published in the "World Congress" official minutes. We would have to ask whether it is likely that the "World Congress" would have recommended that Tampoe terminate either his role as head of the Ceylon Mercantile Union or his leadership of the LSSP(R) unless some gross political irregularities at least on this point had been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all Commission participants. We would have to point to the whole pattern of conduct of the U.Sec. and its predecessor body in Ceylon. And we would still be entirely justified in demanding that professed Trotskyists take a stand on the basis of the available evidence and denounce any who would hide their political complicity behind know-nothingism and the cynical bourgeois aphorism that "the truth is always somewhere in between."

But, caught up in the technique of the big lie, Vithana has gone one step further, thereby reducing his credibility below zero: *he has denied that the Ceylon Commission ever took place!* But in his eagerness to bury the Tampoe scandal once and for all, Vithana has run smack up against the "World Congress" minutes themselves, which reported the constitution of a Ceylon Commission, noted a verbal report from the Commission and a discussion and reprinted a five-part motion! (The relevant extracts from the minutes were reprinted in *Spartacist* No. 21). In fact, these minutes are available to any SWP member possessing a back file of SWP internal bulletins, (see *SWP International Information Bulletin* No. 9, July 1969) and presumably to members of other organizations associated with or affiliated to the U.Sec. Thus, like Tampoe—exposed by the reports of his own "World Congress"—Vithana stands condemned as a liar by the official minutes of his own organization!

We can only echo Vithana's sentiments that "History has strange ways of unmasking slanderers and liars in the working-class movement"! ■

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SP22

... Letter to OCRFI

(continued from page 32)

elaborated on this conception over the German crisis of 1929-33 and also in his discussions with SWP leaders in 1940 regarding an approach by the SWP to the Communist Party U.S.A.

The united front is *nothing more* than a means, a tactic, by which the revolutionary party, i.e. its program and authority, can in times of crisis mobilize and then win over masses (at that time supporters of other parties) by means of concrete demands for common action made to the reformist organizations. Any other interpretation must base itself on a supposed latent revolutionary vanguard capacity within the reformist or Stalinist parties themselves—a central proposition of Pabloism.

The aim of the united front must be to embed the revolutionary program in the masses. In the same way, in the highest expression of the united front, the soviets, the condition for their conquest of power is the ascendancy of the revolutionary program. Any form of fetishism toward the mere form of united fronts or soviets (or for that matter toward trade unions or factory committees) means abdicating as revolutionists, because at bottom it is the dissolution of the vanguard party into the class through the substitution of such forms (and other politics!) for the role of the revolutionary party. This is not Leninism but at best a variant of Luxemburgism. One of Lenin's greatest achievements in counterposing the revolutionary vanguard to the reformists was to transcend the Kautskyan conception of "the party of the whole class." To place emphasis upon some mass form at the expense of the vanguard party would be to smuggle back in the Kautskyan conception.

When erstwhile revolutionary forces are qualitatively weak in comparison to mass reformist or Stalinist parties it is, in ordinary circumstances, equally illusory either to make direct "united front" appeals to the large formations or to advocate combinations among such large forces (when Trotsky called for the united front between the SPD and KPD he believed that the latter still had a revolutionary potential).

Certainly the tactics appropriate to a full-fledged revolutionary party cannot be mechanically assigned to a grouping qualitatively lacking the capacity to struggle to take the leadership of the class. However, the differences in functioning are in the opposite direction from those projected by the OCI. To the extent that the revolutionary tendency must function as a propaganda league, the more it must stress the presentation of its full program. As Trotsky noted, in the first instance Bolshevism is built upon granite foundations, and maneuvers can only be carried out in a principled fashion upon that foundation. The united front of the working class, of course, is the maneuver on the grand scale.

(2) *Bolivian POR*: We do not believe that the POR's participation in the emigre Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front (FRA) fell from the skies. We agree with the OCI and the OCRFI resolution that the FRA—created following the coup of the rightist general Banzer, incorporating elements of the "national bourgeoisie" including General Torres—is a popular front and not the continuation of the Popular Assembly, which may

have possessed the essential formal prerequisites to be a proletarian soviet pole in opposition to the earlier regime of the leftist general Torres. It appears to us that in the period of the Torres regime the best that can be said of the POR is that it subordinated the development of the vanguard party to that of the Popular Assembly, i.e. subordinated the revolutionary program to an ill-defined and vacillating collection of left nationalist and Stalinist political prejudices. Given the default of revolutionists, the Popular Assembly necessarily concretely possessed a core of Menshevik acquiescence to the "national bourgeoisie." For further elaboration, see *Workers Vanguard* No. 3. In our estimation the POR's earlier policy, which the OCRFI resolution emphatically supports, is an embodiment of the erroneous conception of a "strategic united front" and demonstrates the resulting subordination of the vanguard organization to the mass organization, in this case to the Popular Assembly.

Prolonged periods of repression there have severely limited our knowledge of or contact with the Bolivian POR, but it appears to us on the basis of available evidence that the organization has played a characteristically centrist role at least as far back as the revolutionary upheaval in 1952.

(3) *Stalinism*: We note that in the past the OCI has tended to equate the struggle against imperialism with the struggle against Stalinism, e.g. the slogans advanced at the 1971 Essen Conference. The general Political Resolution submitted by the OCI and adopted by the OCRFI takes this equation one step further when it denies the "double nature" of the Stalinist bureaucracy, writing of it simply as "the organism of the bourgeoisie

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within the working-class movement." Perhaps the OCI has been led to this false formulation through a simplistic linear extension of the true and valuable insight that the class struggles of the workers cut across the "Iron Curtain."

To us, and we believe to Trotsky, the Stalinist bureaucracy has a *contradictory* character. Thus in 1939 it conciliated Hitler and undermined the defense of the Soviet Union. But beginning in 1941 it fought (badly!) against the Hitlerite invasion. Thus our wartime policy was one of revolutionary defensism toward the Soviet Union, i.e., to fight against the imperialist invader and to overthrow the bureaucracy through political revolution, with by no means the least aim being to remove the terrible bureaucratic impediment in that fight. In the Indochinese war the role of the Hanoi bureaucracy, and our attitude toward it and the tasks of the Vietnamese proletariat, are essentially the same.

In the SWP's 1953 factional struggle, the Cannon-Dobbs majority sought to defend itself against the Cochran-Clarke Pabloist minority by putting forth a position (similar to that of the OCRFI), that the Stalinist bureaucracy is "counter-revolutionary through and through and to the core." Since this was a possibility truly applicable only to capitalist restorationist elements, in their most extreme form either fascist or CIA agents, the SWP majority was compelled to commit a host of political blunders in attempting to defend its formulation; and in fact this position, along with Cannon's advocacy of federated internationalism, represented departures from Trotskyism which helped undermine the revolutionary fibre of the SWP.

Also in this connection we note the OCI's analysis of Cuba in *La Verité* No. 557, July 1972. The OCI's refusal to draw the conclusion from its analysis—which until that point parallels our own—that Cuba, qualitatively, is a deformed workers state indicates the potential departure from the Leninist theory of the state in favor of a linear, bourgeois conception as of a thermometer which simply and gradually passes from "bourgeois state" to "workers state" by small increments without a qualitative change. Such a methodology is a cornerstone of Pabloism. According to this conception, presumably the reverse process from "workers" to "bourgeois" state by small incremental shifts could be comparably possible. Trotsky correctly denounced this latter idea as "unwinding the film of reformism in reverse." We note however that the OCI appears inconsistent on the characterization of the Cuban state; "The Tasks of Rebuilding the Fourth International" (in *La Correspondance Internationale*, June 1972, page 20) calls for the "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, of workers' conquests in Eastern Europe, of the revolutionary war in Vietnam...."

(4) *On the Youth:* We note that the relation of the OCI to the Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme is unprecedented in the history of Leninist practice and, in fact, represents a catering to petty-bourgeois dual vanguardist sentiment in the student milieu. We also oppose the subsidiary concept of a non-Trotskyist "Revolutionary Youth International" put forward at the Essen Conference in July 1971. The revolutionary youth movement must be programmatically subordinate and formally organizationally linked to the vanguard party, which encompasses the historic experience of the proletariat. Unless this is the case, student and

youth militants can never transcend petty-bourgeois radicalism which at crucial times the proletarian vanguard will find counterposed to itself.

(5) *Violence and the Class Line:* We strongly oppose the OCI's stated willingness to use the bourgeois state apparatus—the courts—to mediate disputes in the working-class movement. In addition, the SL/U.S. is unalterably opposed to the use of physical force to suppress the views of other working-class tendencies where that is the central issue, such as the OCI's forcible prevention of the distribution of leaflets by the IKD at the July 1971 Essen Conference. We are not pacifists, and fully recognize the right of self-defense by ourselves or anyone else in the socialist and labor movements to protect meetings and demonstrations from physical assault and to protect individual militants from terroristic attack. Taken all together, our view flows from the proposition that the greatest free play of ideas within the workers movement strengthens the position of revolutionists and enhances the possibility for united class action. Conversely, it is the reformists and Stalinists—the labor lieutenants of capital—who most characteristically employ violence and victimization within the movement.

(6) *International Committee:* The OCRFI resolution, "On the Tasks of the Reconstruction of the Fourth International," states that, starting in 1966, the SLL "started down the same path which the SWP had previously taken." But further on, the resolution deplores the "explosion of the IC caused by the SLL," on the grounds that this latest split "aggravates the dispersion" which began in 1952. We consider that organizational forms should correspond to political realities. We strongly opposed the break by the SLL ("IC") with us in 1962 because of its apparently mainly organizational character. Only after the very sharp rupture at the 1966 London Conference, and especially in the several years following when the SLL piled up a series of major political differences with us, were we able

(continued next page)

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Women and Revolution

...Letter to OCRFI

to appreciate that the SLL's desire in 1962 to make a rapprochement to the SWP then (to which we were willing to acquiesce but not agree with) was an expression of a fundamental political difference.

The SLL's break with us in 1962 was, however, part of a real struggle within the American group. The 1971 SLL-OCI break seems to have been but a separation of bloc partners without visible repercussions within either group—hence without struggle however unclear.

At bottom, differing estimations of the split in the IC may reflect the linguistically slight but nonetheless real differences between the OCI's "For the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" and the SL's "For the Rebirth of the Fourth International." Our slogan implies that a very fundamental process must be gone through; that it is not possible simply to fit together existing bits and pieces, perhaps with a little chipping here or there, in order to put the edifice together again.

Since the SL/U.S. has itself already had a ten-year history with the IC, we cannot simply approach the OCRFI discussions as if the previous experience between main elements in the OCRFI who had been part of the former IC and ourselves did not exist. Therefore we must review that past experience since it conditions our approach to the OCRFI.

Our views on the development of the IC since 1966 are set forth initially in *Spartacist* No. 6 (June-July 1966) on the London 1966 Conference and our expulsion; in the article on the Healy-Wohlforth current in *Spartacist* No. 17-18 (August-September 1970); in *Spartacist* No. 20 (April-May 1971) which is a summary of political and organizational developments since 1966; and in *Workers Vanguard* No. 3 (December 1971) on the SLL-OCI split. As you will note from these materials, from the time we first became aware of it at the London Conference, we protested the absence of democratic centralism in the IC.

We believe that one of the necessary tests of genuine revolutionists is the demonstrated capacity to even ruthlessly undertake self-criticism. The "International Committee" dominated by the SWP from 1954 to 1963 and by the SLL from 1963 to 1971 was always partly fictitious and partly a formalization of blocs of convenience by essentially national organizations. This demands explanation by those who would not simply repeat their previous experience. It is not enough to pass over the last eighteen years with the promise that from now on things will be done differently.

We were definitively expelled from the Healyite international conglomeration in 1966 at the very time the OCRFI pinpoints as the beginning of the SLL's downhill slide. We believe there is a relationship. Evidently as part of the OCI's attempt to remain in a common bloc with the SLL, and perhaps in part through ignorance of our real positions, the OCI has over the years projected upon the SL/U.S. a series of positions. Not only do we not hold, nor have we ever held, these views, but most of them are the exact opposite of our views. For example, the OCI asserted that we believe in the "family of Trotskyism" even

though at the 1966 London Conference our delegation was struck by the aptness of an OCI speaker's statement "there is no family of Trotskyism" and our speaker specifically quoted that observation approvingly, as was reported in *Spartacist* No. 6 and many times since. In the "Statement by the OCI" of 1967 on the IC, reference is repeatedly made to a "VO-Robertson bloc" and the general conclusion drawn that "the struggle against Robertson is fully identified with the struggle against Pabloism. His positions join those of the SWP and the United Secretariat where they are not those of Pablo." The OCI in similar terms apologized to the SLL for the invitation of an SL/U.S. observer to the Essen Conference.

The SL/U.S. was aware from 1962 on that the OCI tendency was not to be equated with the SLL, and after our expulsion from the London Conference we continued to note the difference (for example in *Spartacist* No. 17-18, in discussing Healy's attempted rapprochement with the United Secretariat, we wrote of the Healy-Banda group "and their politically far superior but internationally quiescent French allies, the Lambert group." We also knew through private sources that at least since 1967 the Wohlforth group internally had been conducting a vigorous campaign to discredit the OCI.

Our characterization of the OCI as politically superior to the SLL was based on a series of political positions which the OCI held in common with us in counterposition to the views of the SLL. Recent OCI polemics against the SLL (e.g. *La Verité* No. 556) note the OCI's objection to several key SLL positions which we had also opposed: the SLL's willful use of "dialectics" as a mystification to hide political questions; the SLL's chronic tailoring of Stalinism in Vietnam; the SLL's enthusing over the Chinese "Red Guards"; the SLL's notion of a classless "Arab Revolution"; the SLL's unprincipled approach to the United Secretariat-SWP in 1970. We also considered of importance the OCI's objection to the SLL position that Pabloist revisionism had not organizationally destroyed the Fourth International. The OCI's position on this question appears to correspond to the view we have consistently held and upon which we spoke insistently at the 1966 London Conference.

Moreover, we have always taken a very serious attitude toward the OCI, not because of its numbers but because of its experienced senior cadres and its continuity in the world movement. We have centered in this letter on the presumed differences between us and the OCI, but the strengths of the OCI have reflected themselves as well, in specific political positions, some of which we have learned from, such as the OCI's insistence on the basic class unity across the whole of Europe, the "Iron Curtain" notwithstanding. Other positions as noted above we have developed in an independent but parallel fashion. Above all, we respect the OCI for its adamant attempt to give life to its internationalism.

That is why we patiently waited when no other option was open to us vis-a-vis the OCI, and when we had the opportunity we have persistently sought discussion. It was especially with the OCI in mind that in the concluding portion of our final statement upon being expelled from the London Conference in 1966 we stated,

"If the comrades go ahead to exclude us from this conference, we ask only what we have asked before—study our documents, including our present draft on U.S. work before you now, and our work over the next months and years. We will do the same, and a unification of the proper Trotskyist forces will be achieved, despite this tragic setback."

Recently, in the document "The Tasks of Rebuilding the Fourth International" (which the introduction to the English edition states is "central to [the] international discussion"), the OCI characterized the SL from the 1966 Conference as "centrist" or "centrist-sectarian." Thus, rather than following our documents and our ongoing work as we asked in 1966, the OCI has simply continued to echo the SLL's avalanche of falsehood aimed at our political obliteration. In the light of the above points, this would seem an appropriate time for the OCI and with it the OCRFI to undertake a thorough examination of the SL's politics.

We do not expect, and would have no confidence in, a simple reversal of appraisal of the SL/U.S. by the OCI. Estimations of the SL/U.S. by the groups comprising the OCRFI should be guided by two considerations. One is the questions of general political and programmatic character such as we have gone into above. We naturally believe that we are correct about these; but because our views have taken shape within the American Trotskyist framework (and during a period of enforced national isolation) we must allow that they may be partial, and in ways which we cannot presently know. As the main Political Report to our recent National Conference stated: "The SL/U.S. urgently requires disciplined subordination to an international leadership not subject to the deforming pressures of our particular national situation." (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 15, January 1973) It was in this spirit that we published our article "Genesis of Pabloism" (*Spartacist* No. 21, Fall 1972) which contained substantially the sum total of our present understanding of Pabloism.

The other question, subordinate but within the framework of essential programmatic agreement very important and perhaps contributory to that programmatic agreement is the question of comrades internationally understanding the concrete reality of the socialist movement in the U.S. in the context of the evolved American labor movement and the specific configuration of class relations in this country. There is a striking lack of correspondence between the existing divisions within the ostensibly Marxist movements in Europe and America so that any effort to superimpose groups in Europe on "similar" groups in the U.S. is inappropriate. The six-months' stay by Comrade Sharpe in France was extremely helpful in bringing this point home to us. It would be extremely clarifying for example if a representative of the OCI could come to this country for an extended stay to examine, for example, not only the SL/U.S. in its concrete work, but also currents such as the "Vanguard Newsletter" of Turner-Fender, which has stood apparently closest formally to the OCI; the International Socialists, who mainly look to *Lutte Ouvrière* as their closest friends in France, but who contain sympathizers of the OCI among them; and the other tendencies

within the American radical movement. Moreover, the trade unions as they have evolved here should be examined in the union offices and on picket lines. More broadly, characteristic college campuses and the reality of the National Student Association should be investigated.

We take our commitment as internationalists seriously as a condition for our very survival as Marxian revolutionists, and by this we mean neither diplomatic non-aggression pacts with groups in other countries nor the Healyite fashion of exporting subservient mini-SLLs. As one of the results of what is for us precipitous growth domestically, we are acquiring the resources—human and material—to undertake for the first time on a sustained basis our international obligations.

It is in the context of our need for a disciplined International and our firm commitment to fight to bring about the programmatic agreement which forms the only basis for such an International, that we wish to participate in the discussion opened by the OCRFI.

We are enclosing copies of all our documents referred to in this letter. Should we be accepted into the discussion organized by the OCRFI, in order to familiarize comrades internationally with our views, we would like to submit three documents initially to the discussion: (1) this letter, (2) our delegation's remarks to the 1966 London Conference, (3) our Statement of Principles.

Fraternally,

Political Bureau
Spartacist League/U.S.

cc. Spartacist League/Australia-New Zealand

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Letter to the OCRFI and the OCI

15 January 1973

Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International; and
Organisation Communiste Internationaliste

Dear Comrades,

At the Third National Conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. we held a major discussion on the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI), based on our translations from the October 1972 issue of *La Correspondance Internationale* containing the basic documents and discussion from your international conference of July 1972. We were also guided by the reports of our comrades Sharpe and Foster of their discussions last summer with comrade DeM. of the OCI.

We give serious attention to the OCRFI because we note that some of the steps that it has undertaken go in the direction of resolving the impasse which has existed between the SL/U.S. and the International Committee (IC) since November 1962, and the acute hostility between us after the April 1966 IC Conference in London. We are in agreement with the stated goal of the OCRFI to fight on the program of the Fourth International to reconstruct a democratic-centralist world party, and to pursue this aim at present through a regulated political discussion in an international discussion bulletin culminating in an international conference. We note that toward this end your July conference did indeed represent a break with the federated bloc practice of the former IC and was indeed marked by a real and vigorous discussion such as was absent from the Third Conference of the IC in London in 1966. Thus it appears to us that on the face of it the OCRFI does possess one of the essential qualities necessary for the struggle to verify the authentic Trotskyist program and to measure by that program the political practice, in its development, of national groups participating in the discussion. Therefore the SL/U.S. has come to the conclusion that it is part of our duty as internationalists to seek to participate in this discussion.

We note that we fully meet the formal requirement for admission to participation in your discussion process as stated in the resolution, "On the Tasks of the Reconstruction of the Fourth International," i.e., we "state [our] will to fight on the program of the Fourth International to reconstruct the leading center, which [we] agree does not yet exist." (see our 1963 resolution, "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," and later documents) We are unable to request more than simple admission to the discussion, rather than admission to the Organizing Committee of the discussion, because of our programmatic differences, uncertainties about or simple unfamiliarity with views held by members of the Organizing Committee. Since the Organizing Committee also intends to work toward the construction of national sections of the Fourth Inter-

national, we can hardly participate in such activities given this programmatic ambiguity.

In our view, the preliminary purpose of a discussion such as that envisaged by the OCRFI must be to crystallize a series of decisive specific programmatic demands analogous to the concrete points defining revolutionary Marxist principle set forth by Trotsky in the 1929-33 period as the basis for rallying forces from the scattered and politically diverse milieu of oppositional communists.

Therefore we should like to list some of the issues which appear to us to pose differences or central ambiguities between our views and those expressed by the OCRFI or which have been advanced by the OCI. The importance that we attach to these points is that if unresolved they threaten the crystallization of a bona fide and disciplined Trotskyist world movement and center. Therefore from our present understanding these are topics which merit particular discussion.

(1) *United Front*: We differ with the conception of the "strategic united front" as practiced by the OCI and as set forth in "For the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" (especially Section IX, "Fight for Power, Class United Front, Revolutionary Parties") in *La Verité* No. 545, October 1969 and in the general political resolution of the OCRFI. In terms of the OCI's work in France, our position has been elaborated in *Workers Vanguard* No. 11, September 1972. We believe that we share with the first four Congresses of the Communist International the view that the united front is essentially a tactic used by revolutionists "to set the base against the top" under those exceptional conditions and decisive opportunities in which the course of proletarian political life has flowed outside its normal channels. Comrade Trotsky heavily

(continued on page 28)

Demandez:

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No. 1: -Le Comité Internationale éclate
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-Vers la scission dans le Secrétariat Unifié

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Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency

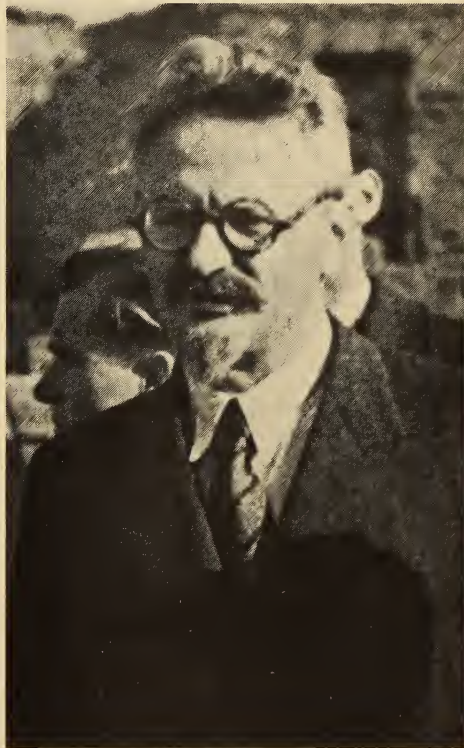
ADOPTED IN JULY 1974

1. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the Spartacist League of the United States declare themselves to be the nucleus for the early crystallization of an international Trotskyist tendency based upon the 1966 Declaration of Principles and dedicated to the rebirth of the Fourth International.

2. In a half dozen other countries parties, groups and committees have expressed their general or specific sympathy or support for the international Spartacist tendency, as have scattered supporters or sympathizers from a number of additional countries. Among these groups and individuals are comrades, in both Europe and Asia, possessing many years or even decades of experience as cadres of the Trotskyist movement.

3. The Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency, a small Marxist wing of the "United Secretariat," centered on the United States and with supporters in Australia and elsewhere, has seen its spokesmen expelled from their national sections and parties for seeking to express their views within the United Secretariat, that deeply factionally divided and unprincipled conglomeration of reformists

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Trotsky near Naples, 1932.

**Spartacusbund Expels Left
Opposition**

**Trotskyist Faction
Fuses with TLD...24**

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and revisionists, latter-day Kautskys, Bukharins and Pablos. If the main contenders in the "United Secretariat" are united in their common and not-so-veiled class collaborationist appetites, they are deeply divided between the electoralism and placid neo-populism of, e.g., the American Socialist Workers Party and the guerrilla-terrorist enthusing of, e.g., the French ex-Ligue Communiste. These differences reflect far more the differing national milieus and resulting opportunist appetites than they do any questions of principle. The recently concluded "Tenth World Congress" of the United Secretariat refused to hear or even acknowledge the appeal of RIT comrades against their expulsion. The RIT forces are now making common cause with the Spartacist tendency. They are but a vanguard of those who will struggle out of the revisionist swamp and toward revolutionary Marxism. Already in France an oppositional Central Committee member of the former Ligue Communiste has broken from the Front Communiste Révolutionnaire (recently formed by *Rouge*) in solidarity with the views of the RIT.

4. In Germany senior elements from the centrist and now fragmented left split from the United Secretariat in 1969 are being won to the Spartacist tendency. They are regrouping around the publication *Kommunistische Korrespondenz*. In Germany three inextricable tasks are posed for Leninists: to programmatically win over subjectively revolutionary elements from among the thousands of young left social democrats, centrists, revisionists and Maoists; to fuse together intellectual and proletarian elements, above all through the development and struggle of communist industrial fractions; to inwardly assimilate some thirty years of Marxist experience and analysis from which the long break in continuity has left the

new generation of German revolutionary Marxists still partially isolated.

5. In Austria, Israel, Canada and elsewhere similar splits, followed by revolutionary regroupment and growth, are occurring. In Austria the initial nucleus came from youth of the United Secretariat section. The "Vanguard" group of Israel is the last still united section of the old "International Committee" which split in 1971 between the British Socialist Labour League's wing led by Gerry Healy (with which the American Workers League of Wohlforth is still united despite friction) and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste led by Pierre Lambert which subsequently lost most of its international support—i.e., with the Bolivian Partido Obrero Revolucionario of G. Lora and the European groupings around the Hungarian, Varga, both breaking away. If the "Vanguard" group amid this welter of disintegration is still unable to choose between the counterposed claims of Healy and Lambert, it did produce and promptly expel a principled and valiant counter-tendency to both. In Canada youth from the Revolutionary Marxist Group's Red Circles are being drawn to Trotskyism. Everywhere unprincipled formations are subjected to the hammer blows of sharpened capitalist crisis and upsurge in the class struggle.

6. In Ceylon where the historical consequences of Pabloist revisionism have been most fully revealed, only the Revolutionary Workers Party, led by the veteran Trotskyist, Edmund Samarakkody, has emerged with integrity from the welter of betrayals perpetrated by the old LSSP and which were aided and abetted by the United Secretariat, its unspeakable agent on the island, Bala Tampoe, and the craven Healyite "International Committee." The RWP has been compelled to seek to generalize the revolutionary Marxist program anew from Marxist class-struggle principles.

7. The Spartacist tendency is now actively working for the immediate convening of an international conference to politically and geographically extend the tendency and to further formalize and consolidate it. The tendency organizing nucleus will seek to work in the closest collaboration with sympathizing groups, particularly in continuing and assuring a broadly-based and full written and verbal discussion process leading to this international conference.

In the pre-conference interim the tendency organizing nucleus assumes political and organizational responsibility for the prior international resolutions, declarations, open letters and agreements for common work of its present constituent groups. These documents notably include: "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," 14 June 1963; Statement to the 3rd Conference of the International Committee, 6 April 1966; Letter to the OCRFI and French OCI, 15 January 1973; Letter to Samarakkody, 27 October 1973; the historical analyses: "Genesis of Pabloism," "Development of the Spartacist League [of New Zealand]," and "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon"; and the agreements endorsed at the interim international conference held in Germany in January 1974, printed in *Workers Vanguard* No. 39, 1 March 1974.

8. Both the present "United Secretariat" and the former "International Committee" despite their respective pretensions "to be" the Fourth International, as a necessary

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condition for their fake "unities," have chronically mocked the principles of internationalism and of Bolshevik democratic centralism as their different national groups or nationally-based factions have gone their own way—ultimately in response to the pressures of their own ruling classes. Thus until the English and French components of the ex-"International Committee" blew apart, the International Committee operated explicitly on the proposition that "the only method of arriving at decisions that remains possible at present is the principle of unanimity" (decision at the 1966 London International Committee Conference). Since then the Healyites have substituted the naked Gauleiter/Führer principle as their mockery of democratic centralism. The other, OCI-led wing of the ex-IC retained the contradiction of launching the Organizing Committee for Reconstruction of the Fourth International which was supposed to initiate political discussion on the basis of the 1938 Transitional Program, while simultaneously seeking to build new national sections. Both such hypothetical sections and the Organizing Committee itself therefore labored under a basic ambiguity from the outset, but the Organizing Committee's disintegration into sharply counterposed elements all of whom swear by the 1938 Program, has left its practice stillborn. Today, following the just concluded "Tenth Congress" of the United Secretariat, its American supporters, being themselves in the Minority internationally, threaten their own national minority, the Internationalist Tendency (which belongs to the international Majority), by declaring:

"The Socialist Workers Party proclaims its fraternal solidarity with the Fourth International but is prevented by reactionary legislation from affiliating to it. All political activities of members of the SWP are decided upon by the democratically elected national leadership bodies of the SWP and by the local and branch units of the party. Unconditional acceptance of the authority of these SWP bodies is a prerequisite of membership. *There are no other bodies whose decisions are binding on the SWP or its members.*" [our emphasis]

—SWP *Internal Informational Bulletin* No. 4, April 1974, from Introductory Note, 17 April 1974

9. This apparently naked assertion of national independence by or toward organizations in the United States is not unique and has a specific history. Thus the American Healyite publicist, Wohlforth, declares in his pamphlet, "Revisionism in Crisis":

"With the passing of the Voorhis Act in 1940 the SWP was barred from membership in the Fourth International by law. Ever since that time the SWP has not been able to be an affiliate of the Fourth International. So today its relationship to the United Secretariat is one of political solidarity just as the Workers' League stands in political solidarity with the International Committee."

The "Voorhis Act" passed by the American Congress in 1940 has been used as a convenient excuse for revisionists to more openly display their concrete anti-internationalism than is convenient for their co-thinkers elsewhere.

This act, while ostensibly aimed centrally at domestic military conspiracies directed by foreign powers, was actually intended, as was the overlapping "Smith Act," to harass the American Communist Party, then supporting the Hitler-Stalin Pact. A key provision states: "An organization is subject to foreign control if... its policies or any of them are determined by or at the suggestion of... an international political organization" (political activity

being defined as that aimed at the forcible control or overthrow of the government). Such organizations were to be subject to such massive and repetitive "registration" requirements as to paralyze them, quite aside from the impermissible nature of many of the disclosures demanded. Thus it was similar to the later "Communist Control Act" which was successfully fought by the American CP. But the "Voorhis Act" with its patently unconstitutional and contradictory provisions has never been used by the government—only the revisionists.

10. Today the United Secretariat Majority makes loud cries in favor of *international* unity and discipline i.e., against the SWP's views and conduct, but it was not always so. When the forerunner of the Spartacist League tried to appeal its expulsion from the SWP to the United Secretariat, Pierre Frank wrote for the United Secretariat on 28 May 1965 that:

"In reply to your letter of May 18 we call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise; namely, the application of democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances."

After Frank gave the Spartacists his answer, Healy publicly expressed sympathy for the Spartacists' plight, charging in his *Newsletter* of 16 June 1965 that Frank "ducks behind a legal formula for cover." But when Healy's own ox was gored by the SWP's publication of the embarrassing pamphlet "Healy 'Reconstructs' the Fourth International," Healy's SLL threatened violence and/or legal action ("Political Committee Statement," 20 August 1966 *Newsletter*) against any who circulated the pamphlet in his England. Shortly he used both—the Tate affair! Healy claimed as the basis for his threats the self-same fear of the Voorhis Act on behalf of Wohlforth and the Spartacists. But the *Spartacist* then replied:

"We for our part reject the SLL's solicitousness on our behalf. The Voorhis Act is a *paper tiger*—never used against anyone and patently unconstitutional. For the Justice Department to start proceedings against a small group like ours or the smaller and less threatening [Wohlforthite] ACFI would make the government a laughing stock, and Healy knows this. He is aware that for years the SWP has hidden behind this very act to defend its own federalist idea of an International."

—*Spartacist* No. 7, September–October 1966

11. More currently, however, as in the United Secretariat Majority's "Again and Always, the Question of the International" (by Alain Krivine and the self-same Pierre Frank, 10 June 1971, SWP *International Information Bulletin* No. 5, July 1971) they attack the public formulation by Jack Barnes, SWP National Secretary, that "the principal condition for international organization" is "collaboration between leaderships... in every country." To this idea Krivine and Frank counterpose "the International, a world party based on democratic centralism." And later the Majority Tendency (in *IIDB* Volume X, No. 20, October 1973) notes that the Minority, in flagrant contradiction to Barnes' and Hansen's previously expressed views, declares, "we will do our utmost to construct a strong [international] center," and the Majority concludes that "actual practice leaves no doubt: the [Minority]

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Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency...

faction would be for a 'strong center' if it were able to have a majority in it." And most recently the same United Secretariat Majority asserts that behind the acts of the SWP-based Minority "lies a federalist conception of the International which contradicts the statutes and the line adopted by the [Tenth] World Congress" (17 March 1974, *IIDB* Volume XI, No. 5, April 1974). The United Secretariat Majority ought to know. They made this accusation in commenting on a Tenth Congress joint Minority-Majority agreement so flagrant in mutually amnestying every sort of indiscipline, public attack and disavowal, organizational chicanery, walkout and expulsion that the Majority also had to offer the feeble disclaimer that these "compromises adopted at this World Congress should in no way be taken as precedents" and that "the exceptional character of these measures is demonstrated, moreover, by the unanimous adoption of our new statutes" (which formally contradict the real practice!). Yes indeed, for opportunists and revisionists basic organizational principles are not of centralized, comradely, even-handed and consistent practice but just boil down to the simple matter of whose ox is gored. This is the organizational aspect of Pabloism.

If today the United Secretariat promises to back up its own friends in the SWP should action be taken against them, the point to be made is not the United Secretariat's dishonesty and hypocrisy per se, but rather the shattering of the United Secretariat's pretensions (like those of the International Committee) to be the Fourth International. They both trim their avowed organizational principles through expediency for petty advantage just as and because they do the same with their political principles and program.

12. The international Spartacist tendency is just that, a tendency in the process of consolidation. But from its international outset it declares its continuing fidelity already tested for a decade in national confines to Marxist-Leninist principle and Trotskyist program—

Revolutionary, Internationalist and Proletarian.

The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long, and, above all, uneven. But it is an indispensable and central task facing those who would win proletarian power and thus open the road to the achievement of socialism for humanity. The struggle begun by L.D. Trotsky in 1929 to constitute an International Left Opposition must be studied. Both despite and because of the differing objective and subjective particulars and with ultimately common basis then and now there is much to be learned especially as to the testing and selection of cadres in the course of the vicissitudes of social and internal struggles.

The giant figure of Trotsky attracted around itself all sorts of personally and programmatically unstable elements repelled by the degenerating Comintern. This led, together with demoralization from the succession of working-class defeats culminating in the second World War, to a prolonged and not always successful sorting out process. It is a small compensation for the lack of a Trotsky that the Spartacist tendency has little extraneous, symbolic drawing power at the outset. But a decade of largely localized experience shows no lack of weak or accidental elements drawn temporarily to the tendency. The only real test is in hard-driving, all-sided involvement in living class struggle.

As L.D. Trotsky noted in "At the Fresh Grave of Kote Tsintsadze," 7 January 1931:

"It took altogether extraordinary conditions like czarism, illegality, prison, and deportation, many years of struggle against the Mensheviks, and especially the experience of three revolutions to produce fighters like Kote Tsintsadze.... The Communist parties in the West have not yet brought up fighters of Tsintsadze's type. This is their besetting weakness, determined by historical reasons but nonetheless a weakness. The Left Opposition in the Western countries is not an exception in this respect and it must well take note of it."

Central Committee, SL/ANZ

Central Committee, SL/U.S.

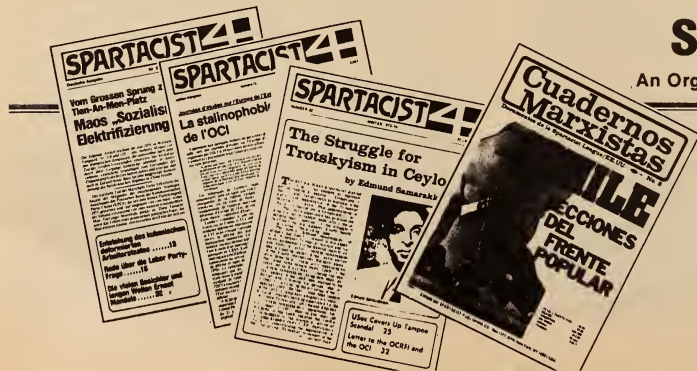
[This draft agreed to by the Political Bureau of the SL/U.S. and a representative of the Central Committee of the SL/ANZ, 22 May 1974; accepted by the Central Committee, SL/ANZ, 7 June 1974; declared to be in force, following concurrence with it at the European summer camp of the international Spartacist tendency, 6 July 1974.]

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Letter to the Spanish Liga Comunista

In June 1975 the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) sent the following letter to the Liga Comunista de España (LCE), a Spanish sympathizing section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec). The letter had been prompted by an invitation from a member of the LCE's political bureau, at a meeting in February, to initiate organization-to-organization written discussion. No reply was ever received, and in the interim the LCE's politics have considerably changed. Nevertheless, the document retains its value as a polemic directed at left-leaning elements within the USec.

The Liga had aligned itself with the misnamed Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF) of the USec on the basis of the pseudo-orthodox phraseology which LTF leaders—the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST)—found useful in polemicalizing against Ernest Mandel's International Majority Tendency (IMT). The *reformist* SWP and PST were deeply mired in class collaborationism on their own national terrains while abstractly criticizing the popular-frontism of the IMT abroad. However, at this time the LCE not only vigorously criticized the French Mandelites for refusing to characterize the Union of the Left as a popular front, but also attacked the other Spanish USec sympathizing section—the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR)—for practicing popular-frontism at home where pressures for capitulation were strongest.

The LCE was not the only group in the USec orbit which was taken in by the LTF's false appeal to orthodoxy. In the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the heterogeneous Tendency 4 included both committed supporters of the LTF—whose politics placed them to the right of the centrist IMT—and would-be left opponents of the Khrushchev leadership. In Portugal, the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT)—at that time not formally affiliated to the USec, but politically close to the Spanish LCE—opposed giving political support to the bonapartist Armed Forces Movement (MFA), while the IMT-linked Liga Comunista Internacionalista was appealing to the "progressive officers" of the MFA.

Since this letter was written the LTF has split down the middle, with the PST setting up a third faction in the USec, the Bolshevik Tendency. This led to a three-way split in the Spanish LCE, with some elements joining the LCR, a group of PST supporters splitting to set up the Liga Socialista Revolucionaria, and the remainder coming firmly under the thumb of the SWP.

Events in Portugal during the summer of 1975, and the debate they touched off inside the USec, represented a key turning point for the LCE. Its articles on Portugal in 1974 and early 1975 heavily emphasized opposition to popular-frontism. In *Combate* No. 23 (July 1974), the LCE wrote:

"...this confrontation between the popular-frontist policies of the Stalinist leaderships and the line of workers united front which the Trotskyists have always upheld transcends the French presidential elections and the formation of the

provisional government in Portugal. *This is the central strategic question which is put in quite concrete terms before the European workers movement.*" [our emphasis]

No more. Today the LCE says the central issue in Portugal is "the struggle for democracy!"

In the summer of 1975 the Portuguese Socialist Party of Mário Soares spearheaded an anti-communist mobilization in the name of (bourgeois) "democracy," dragging in its wake the ostensible Trotskyists of the American SWP and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste. First, on the *República* affair (see "Fight MFA Suppression of Left Media in Portugal!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 83, 31 October 1975) the SWP went beyond defense of freedom of the press to politically support Soares against the printers who had carried out a takeover of the pro-Socialist Party newspaper. Then, when Soares launched a drive against the Gonçalves government—attacking it for tolerating "anarcho-populism," demanding that workers militias be disarmed and embryonic organs of dual power crushed, justifying the actions of reactionary mobs who burned down Communist Party headquarters—the SWP declared that, "The Socialist Party has more and more become the rallying ground for forces in the workers movement that refuse to bow to the Stalinists."

In August of that year, while flames were leaping from Communist Party offices across northern Portugal, the steering committee of the "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" met to discuss a draft document drawn up by the SWP leadership on "The Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution." The theoretical guru of the PST, Nahuel Moreno, had written to SWP leader Joseph Hansen expressing a number of disagreements with the latter's analysis of Portugal. Hansen replied (letter of 9 August 1975) that, "It appears to me that the main axis of the Trotskyist political course [in Portugal] must be defense of the democratic conquests" ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, January 1976).

In the discussions at the LTF steering committee it was not the PST delegates who most sharply criticized the SWP's draft, but the Spanish LCE. A statement by the political bureau of the LCE ("Concerning the Draft Resolution on Portugal") criticized the draft for not characterizing the government as a popular front and pointed to its "one-sided" characterization of the Socialist Party: "...there is no clear analysis and confirmation of the counterrevolutionary nature of its political line." The LCE critique concludes:

"We cannot limit ourselves to centering the program exclusively on defense of democratic rights, though at a given concrete moment this could be the axis.

"On the other hand, we should emphasize the need for a concrete program to develop, transform and consolidate the [workers] committees and commissions which is one of the central tasks for advancing the class independence of the mass movements.

"Finally, it is necessary to indicate clearly the central role

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Liga Comunista...

played by a governmental slogan as the expression of class independence and the need to break with the bourgeoisie...."

Rather than fighting out these differences, however, both PST and LCE representatives voted for the SWP draft with the understanding that the final version would be edited in light of their criticisms. Nothing of the sort happened. The SWP-edited version was published with the "democratic rights" axis intact and the apologetics for Soares unchanged.

Moreno broke with the SWP over this document, although he was hard-put to explain his support for earlier LTF positions in the same tenor. (He didn't even try to harmonize his new-found leftist verbiage with the PST's own shameful declarations of support for the "institutional process" in Argentina against left-wing guerrillas!) But the LCE leadership capitulated miserably. The declaration of the PST's Bolshevik Tendency documents this:

"The SWP's positions on Portugal were resisted from the beginning by 90 percent of the faction, which in criticizing the draft *Key Issues* demanded that the issue of the organs of power be posed. The clearest and most brilliant opposition came from the leadership of the Spanish LTF.... For obscure reasons that escape us, the Spanish leadership of the LTF capitulated completely to the SWP and accepted the second version of *Key Issues*... which says practically the same as the former. This provoked a crisis in the faction in Spain...."

[SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, January 1977

This pitiful right turn by the LCE leadership on Portugal was soon manifested in its political positions on domestic issues as well, where it took over the SWP's reformist recipes lock, stock and barrel. Tailing Soares in Portugal, it was only logical that the LCE should crawl after Spanish social-democratic leader Felipe González at home.

In the past the LCE had insisted on unconditional submission to the discipline of the Stalinist-dominated workers commissions (CC.OO.), sharply criticizing the LCR for seeking to go around the CC.OO. at the height of the 1973 Pamplona strike movement, for instance. But in late 1976 the LCE switched horses, abruptly exiting from the CC.OO., charging suppression of democratic rights by the Communist Party (which had always been the case) and joining up with the social-democratic UGT union federation. However, in doing so it remained true to its tailist conceptions of "strategic unity" with the reformist misleaders, as indicated in the following statement by LCE-supported trade unionists on joining the UGT:

"We accept the statutes and decisions of the UGT congress and we are not going to struggle to destroy it. Rather we will strengthen the UGT and be a sector of its left wing which fights for unity and for the socialist society."

—*Cambio* 16, 18 October 1976

We are unable, with the limited material at our disposal, to make a comprehensive critique of the LCE's policy in Spain today. But with its pitiful capitulation before Soares and adoption of the SWP's social-democratic policies *in toto*, any remaining subjectively revolutionary impulses of its membership can only end in frustration. The road to a revolutionary policy in Spain today requires openly rejecting and combating the LCE's undisguised anti-Trotskyist revisionism.

6 June 1975

Dear Comrades,

We gladly accept the invitation by Comrade M. to initiate correspondence between the international Spartacist tendency and the LCE. We must make clear, however, that we are not familiar with your political views on a whole range of important subjects. Thus a main purpose of this letter is to determine whether a basis for organization-to-organization discussions exists.

It should be explained at the outset why we take this opportunity seriously. The LCE appears to us to be one of the subjectively most serious and leftist groups in the swamp that goes by the name of the "United Secretariat." And unlike the petty-bourgeois radicals of the International Majority Tendency (IMT), your organization seems to be attracted by the (fraudulent) appeal to Marxist orthodoxy of the misnamed "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" (LTF).

But no communist can feel anything but utter contempt for your international bloc partners, the consummate reformists of the American Socialist Workers Party and the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores! The SWP and PST are sworn enemies of proletarian revolution: behind the quotations from Lenin and Trotsky they use to refute IMT guerrillaism lies a cringing fear of angering their own bourgeoisies.

We detect an important difference between the LCE and the SWP/PST, however. The latter are simply cynical impostors who roundly condemn the popular-frontist policies of the IMT, then turn around and practice even more shameless class collaboration in their national habitats. In contrast, the Liga Comunista has vigorously denounced popular frontism at home as well as when persecuted by factional opponents abroad.

While in no sense underrating this significant distinction, we must also take seriously the fact that the LCE is a sympathizing organization of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" [USeC], which is neither united nor the Fourth International; and is a member of the "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction," which is neither Leninist nor Trotskyist nor, for that matter, a faction. *The Liga Comunista thereby appears before the Spanish proletariat as a supporter of a fake "International" whose other local affiliate, the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR), is incapable of drawing a class line against popular frontism and could even enter at any moment into the popular front Assembly of Catalonia. You must likewise take responsibility for disgusting betrayals of socialist principle by the SWP and PST.*

To take two of the most recent notorious examples, you are certainly well aware of the declarations by the PST which in effect give "critical support" to the murderous Peronist regime in Argentina, and of the SWP's call for federal troops to Boston. We do not know of any statement by the LCE against these treacherous expressions of confidence in the capitalist state by leaders of the LTF. It would be foolish to hope for serious organization-to-organization discussions without a condemnation by the Liga Comunista of the SWP's call for federal troops and the PST's support for the "continuity" of the Argentine

government. And it is obvious that for any serious revolutionary such a condemnation would require a break with the politics of the LTF.

Such a break cannot be accomplished with a few strokes of the pen. What is needed is a serious investigation of the real politics of the SWP and PST, and a frank evaluation of the causes of the LCE's errors. We know that in the past leaders of the Liga Comunista have sought to seriously re-examine some of their past positions. When a representative of the IMT sought to drop the LCR's previous ultra-left policy toward the workers commissions, the Encrucijada tendency insisted on a political discussion of the origins of this policy. Will you show the same determination now? With hundreds of leftist militants arrested by and assassinated with the connivance of the government whose "continuity" is supported by Coral & Co., half-hearted "criticisms" of certain "formulations" by the PST are not enough!

Why is the Liga Comunista aligned with the LTF in the first place? At present we lack the information to answer this question. In the event, however, that you have taken seriously the occasionally orthodox-sounding verbiage of Joe Hansen's factional documents, and that you are not fully familiar with the actual practice of the SWP and PST, one aim of this letter is to demonstrate the total fraudulence of any pretense to Trotskyism by these charlatans and expose the origins of their opportunist policies: Pabloism. (The LCE's concept of a united front "strategy" is also taken up.)

A Social Democrat and a Chameleon

Statements by the PST during the last 15 months have been so openly class-collaborationist that one would have to be blind not to see the gulf that separates these reformist social democrats from revolutionary Trotskyism. In a joint declaration with the CP and six bourgeois parties presented to General Perón on 21 March, 1974, the PST promised to adhere to "the institutional process" and condemned all those (e.g., communists) who seek to change it. This statement unambiguously supports capitalist "law and order," at least implicitly siding with the government and liberal bourgeois parties against leftist guerrillas such as the ERP/PRT [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo/Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores].

The implication was made explicit in a statement by PST leader Juan Carlos Coral to the "multi-sectorial" meeting with President Isabel Perón on October 8, where that phony socialist declared the guerrillas to be a "mirror-image" of the rightist death squads (AAA). Coral's speech included a statement which can only be interpreted as a declaration of political support for the Peronist regime: "we will fight for the continuity of this government," said the representative of the "Trotskyist" PST (*Avanzada Socialista*, 15 October 1974)!

These statements conciliating the Peronist government are nothing new. The PST's "theoretician" Nahuel Moreno has been playing this game for decades, for a dozen years with the toleration of the United Secretariat. The facts are no secret, and we have dealt with them at length in an article ("Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism," *Workers Vanguard* No. 24, 6 July 1973) which is attached. Suffice it to say that during the late 1950's and early 1960's Moreno put out the magazine *Palabra Obrera*, which

called itself the "organ of revolutionary workers Peronism" and claimed to be issued "under the discipline of General Perón and the Peronist Supreme Council"! More recently, Coral/Moreno offered to vote for the Peronist slate if 80 percent of Justicialista candidates were workers (*AS*, 22 November 1972) and told Peronist President Hector Cámpora he could "count on our proletarian solidarity" (*AS*, 30 May-6 June 1973).

So if today the PST capitulates to the Perón government, you can not blame this on misformulations or an alleged recent turn. Nor are these betrayals solely the responsibility of Coral (who is merely the social democrat he always has been) and Moreno (a political chameleon who is just doing what comes naturally). To fight for the Marxist principle of working-class independence it is necessary to break with Hansen and Mandel who for years gave a "left" cover to Moreno's machinations.

For example: Moreno and Hansen now bitterly attack the IMT's Guevarism, but in the early and mid-1960's they wholeheartedly supported peasant guerrilla war, at least on paper. Moreno was at this time the most guerrillist of them all. "History ... has rejected the theory that the proletariat, in the backward countries, is the revolutionary leadership," he wrote in 1961, thereby throwing the Transitional Program and the theory of permanent revolution out the window. It is necessary to "synthesize the correct general theory and program (Trotskyist) with the correct particular theory and program (Mao Tse-tungist or Castroist)," he added (N. Moreno, *La revolución latinoamericana*).

If a wing of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), a section of the United Secretariat founded and "educated" by Moreno, was subsequently to undertake urban and rural guerrilla warfare, hailing "our main Comandante, Che Guevara" and welcoming "the contributions that Trotsky, Kim Il Sung, Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh and General Giap have made for the revolution" (Roberto Santucho, quoted in *Intercontinental Press*, 27 November 1972), the cause is not to be sought in the Latin American resolution of the "Ninth World Congress." Hansen and Moreno are just as responsible as Mandel, just a bit more "cautious" when putting their words into practice.

Do you wish to go to the origins of petty-bourgeois guerrillaism in the United Secretariat? If so, you must reject the very founding document of the USec, "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement" (written by the SWP majority in March 1963), which stated that "guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power." The Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP, forerunner of the Spartacist League/U.S., replied: "peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. ... Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such [Marxist] leadership of the revolutionary proletariat" ("Toward the Rebirth of the

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Fourth International," June 1963). Hansen's opposition to guerrillaism is a phony!

Not an International But a Non-Aggression Pact

Thus the very founding of the United Secretariat was based on rejection of the theory of permanent revolution and the indispensable leading role of the working class under its Trotskyist vanguard party. For the patriarchs of the former International Secretariat (Ernest Mandel, Livio Maitan, Pierre Frank) this was simply a continuation of the Pabloist liquidationism they had been expounding since the early 1950's. From Pablo's "deep entry" into the Stalinist parties to the USec's cheerleading for Castro, these professional capitulators have apologized for one non-proletarian misleader after another.

The SWP resisted Pablo's program of liquidating into the reformist parties in the 1950's, albeit after considerable hesitation. But following the ravages of McCarthyism against the U.S. left the party increasingly succumbed to the pressures of isolation. When the Cuban Revolution came along, Hansen declared the new regime to be a healthy workers state ("although lacking the forms of workers democracy") thereby hoping to bask in its popularity. Only the Revolutionary Tendency took the position that Cuba was a qualitatively deformed workers state, that an independent Trotskyist party was necessary to lead a political revolution ousting the Stalinist bureaucracy and instituting democratic soviet rule. The six-year-old crisis in the "United" Secretariat is a direct result of its Pabloist policies. Not only was there no "turn" at the Ninth Congress (except to play at putting into practice the hitherto exclusively verbal guerrillaism), but if "unconscious Marxists" (Castro) can replace the Trotskyists and "blunted instruments" (peasant guerrilla bands) can accomplish the tasks of the Leninist party, then why shouldn't all manner of social-democratic, semi-Maoist and Guevarist elements be included in "the International"?

Such a federated rotten bloc of widely disparate forces is organically *incapable* of achieving Marxist clarity or coherent revolutionary action, as the USec has amply demonstrated. What is the "United" Secretariat's position on Chile, for instance? The SWP says Allende's Popular Unity coalition was a popular front, but the IMT and PST deny this. Indochina? The IMT considers the Vietnamese Stalinists to be revolutionaries who have just accomplished "the first victorious 'permanent revolution'" since Cuba, while the SWP refused to take sides in the class war in Indochina and currently holds that South Vietnam is still capitalist!

What of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement, the French Union of the Left, the Chinese "Cultural Revolution," guerrilla warfare, individual terrorism? On none of these vital issues is there a common USec position, and in line with its Menshevik conception of democratic centralism the opposing policies are duly published in the press of the respective sections. No wonder, then, that everywhere there are substantial numbers of LTF and IMT supporters in the same country there have been splits or separate organizations (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Portugal and the U.S.).

Already at the founding of the USec in 1963 its character as an unprincipled non-aggression pact was demonstrated by sweeping under the rug important differences on the 1953 split, China and other topics. Another element of the bogus "reunification" was a tacit agreement not to denounce each other's betrayals, in order to maintain "unity." In a recent public factional polemic against the USec majority, the PST captured this point nicely. Why, it asked, does Mandel attack the PST for making joint declarations with bourgeois politicians yet remain silent about the SWP's "antiwar" coalitions with prominent liberal Democrats?

"We should like to remind them [the IMT leadership] that at the height of the antiwar movement in the United States, quite a few petty bourgeois and even bourgeois figures sought to share the platform in the giant rallies that were staged at the time. The Trotskyists in the United States did not oppose this. In fact they favored it.

"But how the ultralefts screamed! They considered this to be proof positive that the Socialist Workers party had formed an 'interclass political bloc' with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, thereby falling into the Social Democratic 'policy' of class collaborationism. It is one of the main 'proofs' still thrown at the SWP by the ultralefts in the United States (and elsewhere) to bolster the charge that the SWP has 'degenerated,' turned 'reformist,' and 'betrayed' the working class."

—*Intercontinental Press*, 20 January 1975

The "ultra-lefts" who denounced the SWP's class-collaborationist antiwar coalitions were, of course, the Spartacist League, and the PST leaders make an important point in demonstrating the IMT's inconsistency. But Mandel well understands that to accuse the SWP of class collaborationism in its main area of work for half a decade means irrevocably splitting the USec down the middle and destroying its claim to be the Fourth International.

Class Collaboration and the Antiwar Movement

The Socialist Workers Party policy in the antiwar movement of the late 1960's is, in fact, a classic example of its reformist policies. "Single-issue" coalition-building against the Vietnam war dominated the activities of the SWP from 1965 to 1971 and won most of the party's present membership. It was in this school of class collaboration that they were educated, and we can assure you that even among reformist Maoists and pro-Moscow Stalinists the SWP was notorious as the most right-wing "socialist" element in the antiwar movement. The Maoists called for victory of the NLF (at least until the 1973 "peace" accords), but the SWP consistently refused to take sides in the class war raging in Indochina (claiming the issue was solely self-determination). Even the CPUSA was able to posture to the left of the SWP, by seeking to build multi-issue coalitions (most notably the "People's Coalition for Peace and Justice"). The SWP attacked them as "sectarian" since they would scare off potential opponents of the war who disagreed on other points.

The essence of the SWP's antiwar "strategy" was expressed in a 22 November 1965 *Militant* article which called for "[putting] aside sectarian differences to unite and help build a national organization which can encompass anyone willing to oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam, regardless of their commitment, or lack of it, on other questions." What Hansen & Co. sought was a common

organization with bourgeois antiwar groups and liberal capitalist politicians who, understandably, "lack commitment" to wage a working-class struggle against the war.

This did not simply remain on paper as unrealized opportunist appetites. As early as the autumn of 1965 the SWP acted as a broker to cement the "Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee," formed around a single slogan, "Stop the War Now!" and a call for the removal of "all foreign troops" from South Vietnam. This not only endorsed the U.S. government position condemning "North Vietnamese aggression," but avoided the fundamental obligation of proletarian solidarity, namely to call for victory to the Vietnamese revolution.

A similar class-collaborationist formation was the National Peace Action Coalition (NPAC) set up by the SWP in the late 1960's. Far from being an ad hoc bloc for the purpose of holding a demonstration, the SWP-dominated NPAC was an ongoing organization with a distinct political line and a board including Democratic Senator Vance Hartke. Even before Hartke's participation, however, NPAC's popular-front character was demonstrated by its refusal to raise any demand beyond "Out Now!" and its policy of building rallies which focused on bourgeois politicians (Hartke, Mayor John Lindsay, Senators George McGovern and Eugene McCarthy, etc.). It was no accident that every election year (1966, 1968, 1970, 1972), when Democratic Party "peace" candidates would mount their campaigns, the "independent" mass antiwar movement would simply disappear. And the SWP's refusal to call for solidarity with the Indochinese revolution guaranteed that NPAC would disintegrate as soon as large-scale withdrawal of U.S. troops began.

In contrast, the Spartacist League fought against the U.S.'s imperialist war on a class basis. Our demands included "no liberal bourgeois speakers at antiwar rallies," "labor political strikes against the war," "break with the Democrats and Republicans—form a workers party," "smash imperialism—all U.S. troops out of Asia now," and "victory to the Indochinese revolution—no confidence in sellout 'leaders' at home or abroad." One demand which invariably aroused the ire of the SWP "marshals" at all the demonstrations was "All Indochina Must Go Communist."

Our policy was entirely consonant with the Leninist program that imperialist war can only be fought by revolutionary class struggle. Commenting on the Zimmerwald conference Lenin referred to "the fundamental idea of our resolution that a struggle for peace *without* a revolutionary struggle is but an empty and false phrase, that the only way to put an end to the horrors of war is by a revolutionary struggle for socialism" ("The First Step," October 1915). But you will look in vain in the SWP's extensive articles on the Vietnam war and in numerous NPAC demonstrations and meetings for even a breath of revolutionary class struggle.

There is an important parallel here to the antiwar coalitions of the CPUSA in the 1930's. In an SWP pamphlet entitled, "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," James Burnham wrote in 1937:

"Most significant of all is the application of the People's Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League against War and Fascism, the

Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless, Peoples' Front of all those opposed to war.' The class collaborationist character of the Peoples' Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order; and, in contrast, maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism can 'unite' to stop war."

This is a letter-perfect description of the SWP's action in NPAC.

The most dramatic expression of the popular-front character of NPAC came at its July 1971 conference in New York City. The meeting was attended by Senator Hartke and by Victor Reuther, a vice president of the United Auto Workers who was involved in channeling CIA funds to anti-communist unionists in Europe after World War II. A Spartacist League motion called for the exclusion of bourgeois politicians like Hartke from the conference; the SWP chairman refused to vote the motion. Later, when Hartke and Reuther spoke they were heckled by supporters of the Spartacist League and Progressive Labor. The SWP then mobilized its marshals and charged the protesters, injuring several of them with vicious beatings. The next day SL and PL supporters were excluded from the conference (see "SWP Seals Alliance with Bourgeoisie," *Workers' Action* No. 10, September 1971). Unity with the bosses, exclude the communists—this was the SWP's "independent" antiwar policy!

These fake Trotskyists call for and built organizations encompassing "anyone willing to oppose U.S. involvement in Vietnam, regardless of their commitment ... on other questions." We ask you: what would the LCE term an organization composed of all those, regardless of class, who oppose the Franco dictatorship? And what would you say of those who created such a coalition? Your answer in Spain is clear: you call the Assembly of Catalonia a popular front (or the embryo of a popular front) and condemn the class collaborationism of the Stalinists who build it. What do you say about the U.S.?

Federal Troops or Labor/Black Defense?

We could go on at length concerning the SWP's anti-Marxist practice in every arena: sectoralism (separate parties for blacks, Chicanos; "self-determination" for everyone including Indians, homosexuals, women, etc.); support for the labor bureaucracy against "disruptive" rank-and-file militants; blocs with bourgeois feminists in the women's liberation movement (and consequent refusal to raise the demand for free abortion); open support for strikebreaking (in the 1968 New York City teachers strikes); calls for "community control" (even of the police); boundless electoral cretinism, etc.

During recent months the SWP has ever more openly stated its social-democratic aspirations. In December 1974, in order to convince a liberal judge that there was no need for FBI surveillance of its youth group, an official SWP brief to the court declared that the party categorically renounced "violence or any other illegal activity." Shortly afterwards the SWP launched its "'76 Presidential Drive" with a "Bill of Rights for working people," a reformist

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gimmick which essentially calls for reforming capitalism out of existence by constitutional amendment!

Then, in an interview with the *New York Times* (21 April 1975), SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo called for "cutting the war budget" (i.e., not eliminating it), "ending illegal activity of C.I.A. and F.B.I. harassment" (i.e., not touching the legal activities of these anti-communist special police), and "opposition to the present foreign policy, which we characterize as imperialist" (thus spreading the reformist illusion that imperialism could be eliminated by voting in peace-loving statesmen!) Not one of the five demands mentioned by Camejo included anything that has not already been raised by left-liberal Democratic congressmen.

But in the last year the struggle between the Marxist program of working-class independence and reformist class collaborationism has come to a head over a very specific issue: the SWP's call for "Federal Troops to Boston." During the course of a reactionary mobilization against school desegregation through court-ordered busing, there have been a number of racist lynch-mob attacks on black school children in Boston. So, good reformists that they are, the SWP appeals to the armed forces of the capitalist state—the butchers of Indochina—to protect black people!

Revolutionaries warn the working masses to place no confidence in the bourgeois state, pointing out that it defends the interests of the capitalist ruling class and not those of the exploited and oppressed. While it is perfectly correct to call for the enforcement of a law supporting democratic rights (in fact the Spartacist League was among the first to call for implementing the court-ordered busing plan), to call for the intervention of federal troops expresses confidence that they will defend the interests of the oppressed black minority. Marxists call instead for the working masses to rely on their own forces, and warn that if federal troops intervene in Boston it will be to smash any attempt at self-defense by the black population.

In Boston the Spartacist League called for the formation

of integrated working-class defense guards ("labor/black defense") for the schools, children and black communities endangered by racist marauders. This Leninist policy received worldwide press coverage in photos showing our banners in Boston demonstrations. It has also attracted support from a number of black militants. The SWP's response was to denounce our call for an integrated labor defense force as "ultra-left." "The call for trade-union defense guards isn't realistic right now," said Camejo in the *Militant* (1 November 1974), "...you pull this slogan of trade-union guards totally out of the blue. It's not a serious proposal."

Hansen has prettied up SWP policies on the Boston busing crisis for international consumption in a lengthy article in *Intercontinental Press* (25 November 1974) in which he even labeled the SL call for labor/black defense "a commendable stand." This is simply eyewash for the uninformed. Not once did the SWP ever raise such a demand in Boston (or anywhere else) during the past year. On the contrary, at the December 14 demonstration in Boston, when the SL contingent chanted "No Federal Troops—Labor/Black Defense!" a nearby SWP contingent began to chant "Federal Troops to Boston!" in an effort to drown us out.

A sharp line has been drawn over the issue of federal troops to Boston: the reformist SWP and CP, together with black Democrats and the liberal Democratic mayor of Boston, call for the intervention of military forces of the capitalist state; the Spartacist League calls for independent working-class action, for labor/black defense. It is the internationalist obligation of ostensibly revolutionary forces to take sides on this issue. To date, however, not one section of the United Secretariat has publicly opposed the open revisionism of the SWP on the central issue of the class character of the state and the attitude of revolutionaries toward it. Where does the LCE stand?

Trotsky, in any case, put forward a revolutionary policy. He wrote in "War and the Fourth International" (1934):

"To turn to the state, that is, to capital, with the demand to disarm the fascists means to sow the worst democratic illusions, to lull the vigilance of the proletariat, to demoralize its will... The Social Democrats, even the most left ones, that is, those who are ready to repeat general phrases of

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revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, carefully avoid the question of arming the workers, or openly declare this task "chimerical," "adventurous," "romantic," etc."

Commenting on this quotation, the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction (whose leading member was recently expelled from the central committee of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire [LCR]) wrote: "'Romantic' said the left social democrats in 1933, 'unrealistic' Camejo tells us; the years pass, but the vocabulary of the social democrats hardly changes!" (*Spartacist* [édition française] No. 9, 16 May 1975).

We are enclosing articles from our press which deal with this controversy over federal troops to Boston. Some of the most recent ones deal with the "realism" of calling for labor/black defense in a concrete manner: by reporting the formation of a union defense committee to protect the home of a black member from racist attacks. This action, by United Auto Workers Local 6 in Chicago, came as the result of a motion by the Labor Struggle Caucus of that union, one of whose members heads the defense squad. The Caucus is a class-struggle opposition grouping politically supported by the Spartacist League.

United Front: Tactic or Strategy?

We have attempted to study carefully the press of the Liga Comunista in order to form a considered opinion of your political positions and practice. We note in the first place that it is very heavily centered on the Iberian peninsula, and consequently we are not aware of your views on a number of important issues (including Cuba, Ireland, Near East wars, petty-bourgeois nationalism in various countries). Also, since we only have the first volume of the resolutions of your second congress, we would appreciate receiving any additional documents available.

A large part of *Combate* and the provincial organs of the LCE is taken up (correctly) by discussion of workers struggles and the student arena. Concerning the 1973 general strike in Pamplona, the strike wave in the Bajo Llobregat in 1974 and other important strikes we have sought to compare accounts published by the LCE, LCR, ORT [Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores] and Maoist groups to the extent that they are available to us. While we have gained impressions, some important questions are still not clarified for us, and in any case it is risky to judge particular trade-union struggles from afar. We would, however, like to comment on your concept of a strategic united front and, at a general level, its relationship to the tasks of revolutionaries concerning the workers commissions.

In your letter to the central committee of the French Ligue Communiste ("Regarding the Positions Taken by the Ligue Communiste in the Legislative Elections of March 1973," June 1973, [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* No. 5, January 1974), the LCE states: "To the sell-out leaderships' strategic line of united front with the bourgeoisie, concretized at this point in a Union of the Left that is *unable to even fight Pompidou*, it required counterposing the *revolutionary strategy of the class united front*, able to polarize the oppressed masses of the city and countryside around the proletariat" (emphasis in original). The same idea is repeated elsewhere in the documents of the

Liga Comunista in different forms, usually referring to a "Class Pact" as the alternative "counterposed on all levels" to the popular front.

As you are well aware, the concept of a "united front strategy" has been used by the French OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste] to justify its policy of tailing after the present reformist leadership of the class. The most disgusting application of this capitulationist line was the OCI's call for a vote for Mitterrand, the single candidate of the popular-front Union of the Left, in last year's French presidential elections. We do not wish to make an amalgam, equating the LCE with the policy of Lambert, and we are aware that you have criticized the latter as constituting "an elevation of the tactical methods of the united front ... to a strategic principle" ("The Crisis of the LCR and the En Marche Split," in [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 24, December 1973).

However, the line of a "strategy of the class united front" leads ultimately to just the conclusion the OCI has reached. The global alternative to the class collaborationist policies of the reformists is not an all-embracing united front of the organizations claiming to represent the working class nor a mythical "class pact," but rather the *Marxist program of the Leninist vanguard party*. To demand that the Stalinists and social democrats break an electoral coalition with bourgeois parties, to call on the reformists to fight for particular demands in the interests of the class is both principled and necessary; it enables us to demonstrate graphically before the masses the fact that these treacherous misleaders are enemies of proletarian revolution. But to imply that the agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers movement are capable of taking up the full revolutionary program of the Trotskyist party is to confuse the masses, hiding from them the counterrevolutionary program of the reformists and the absolute necessity of an independent Trotskyist party.

We are aware that the LCE warns of the treachery of the Stalinists and emphasizes the need for a Trotskyist party. (So does the OCI, on occasion.) But if, as you state, the united front encompasses the program of working-class independence from the bourgeoisie (as opposed to being one expression of it, in particular circumstances); and if the Stalinists are capable of taking up the united front—then surely they cease to be reformists, committed at all costs to the maintenance of capitalist rule. This is definitely implied in your "strategic resolution" of the second congress of the LCE ("Hacia la república socialista—Por el partido de la IV Internacional") where the following is said in a reply to imaginary accusations by the "apparatuses" that the united front is simply a maneuver:

"If you declare yourselves for the united front and fight consistently in this direction the working class will be greatly aided, will close ranks around its organizations and multiply the impetus of its sallies against the capitalists and their regime. Then we will stop judging you according to facts from your terrible past and present treacheries. We will pay attention to the new facts."

Comrades, when Trotsky said that under special circumstances the reformists may be forced to go farther than they intended, he did *not* mean that they could take up the full revolutionary program! It was *Pablo* who said

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this—and he was consistent with his “analyses,” by no longer fighting to create Trotskyist parties but instead pressuring for the reform of the Stalinist parties. We do not believe that this is the policy of the Liga Comunista, but it is the logical end result of your concept of a “strategy of the class united front.”

(We draw your attention to the section on the united front in our letter to the OCI and OCRFI [*Spartacist* No. 22, Winter 1973-74] for further observations on the notion of a “united front strategy.”)

This is more than a terminological question. The OCI's position of voting for the workers parties of a popular front is derived from the conception of a strategic united front. The Spartacist tendency, in contrast, refuses to give electoral support to any of the parties of a popular front; we call instead for conditional opposition to the workers parties of a popular front, demanding that they break with their bourgeois allies as a condition for electoral support. The logic of our position is quite clear: the fundamental principle of Marxist politics is political independence of the proletariat from the class enemy; if a workers party, even a rotten reformist party such as the British Labour Party, campaigns on its own for office, we can call on the workers to vote for this party as an elementary attempt to draw the class line. But if the workers party is part of a popular front, then to call on the workers to vote for that party is to call on them to put a bourgeois political formation in office!

The LCE also called for votes to the workers parties of the popular front in the second round of the 1973 French parliamentary elections. You argued that abstentionism is a passive policy. If it is a question of abstention on principle, this is correct. The Spartacist tendency, however, has no such policy, and called for a vote to the candidates of the OCI and LO [*Lutte Ouvrière*] which, because they refused to vote for the Left Radicals, presented at least in a distorted and very partial manner a class opposition to the popular front. We also called on the CP and SP to break from the Left Radicals, making any electoral support to their candidates conditional on such a break with the bourgeois party.

We would be interested to know what your policy was in the 1974 French elections when Mitterrand was the single candidate of the popular front. In such a case you could make no pretense of refusing to vote for part of the front; your concrete advice to the workers would be identical to that of the Union of the Left's leaders. Also we would be interested to know your position on the April 25 Portuguese elections. The Portuguese Partido Revolucionário

dos Trabalhadores (PRT), which appears to follow LCE views generally, refused to give support to any of the parties which signed the pact with the Armed Forces Movement. We disagree with the PRT's policy of electoral support to the [Portuguese] LCI [Liga Comunista Internacional] (support which was by no means critical, at least publicly), since in our view the LCI's line toward the MFA amounted to “critical support” of its “progressive wing” rather than intransigent class opposition. But the PRT's refusal to vote for the CP because it was formally committed to class collaboration in the form of participation in the bonapartist bourgeois MFA-dominated regime is correct. Do you disagree with that position?

Workers Commissions and the “Revolutionary General Strike”

Your statements concerning the workers commissions also appear to us to reflect the erroneous concept of a “united front strategy.” You write that: “It is in the Workers Commissions that we Trotskyists think the fundamental organic base of the united front of the militant proletariat is to be found” (“The Crisis of the LCR and the En Marche Split”). In the “strategic resolution” of the second congress of the LCE you add: “The force of the generalized action of the masses, and the centralization of the will to struggle of extremely broad sectors, increasingly require the workers commissions to break with the obstacles which oppose the development of their vocation as *democratic forms of united front of the broad vanguard of the proletariat.*”

What do you mean by the phrases “fundamental organic base of the united front” and “vocation as democratic forms of united front of the broad vanguard”? If you wish to say that the workers commissions have grouped together many of the most combative worker militants, that it is necessary to struggle within them to defeat the Stalinists and other reformists who currently lead them on the path of class collaboration, that it would be stupid and dangerous sectarianism to treat the CC.OO. [workers commissions] as competitors, tacitly identifying the base with the leadership—then we can agree. But you apparently wish to go further.

To talk of the “vocation” of a particular institution in the class struggle is metaphysical. What is the “vocation” of the trade unions, to defend the interests of the workers against the bosses (which is impossible in this epoch except under revolutionary leadership) or to serve the interests of the bosses (as is almost universally the case)? You can say that the present class-collaborationist policies of the unions are a deformation of their basic purpose. But then Lenin was wrong to insist that an independent vanguard party was necessary in order to bring the working class to socialist consciousness, and that trade-union consciousness is bourgeois consciousness.

And what of the Russian soviets from February until September 1917—was their “vocation” that of serving as the organizational structure for the creation of a workers state? Then surely Lenin must have been wrong in withdrawing the slogan of “all power to the soviets” during the ferocious counterrevolutionary repression unleashed by Kerensky following the July days. Shouldn't the Bolsheviks instead have limited themselves to struggling

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for a majority in the soviets, unconditionally submitting themselves to the discipline of the soviet majority? They did not do so, and they were right.

The function of a particular institution in the class struggle is decided by the constellation of political class forces which determines its policy. The German workers councils of 1918 were dominated by the majority social democrats and ratified the establishment of a bourgeois parliamentary republic, for example. One can speak of the actual role played by this or that institution, and one can also speak of the capacity of a particular framework to fulfill other functions.

In our view, the actual role played by the Spanish workers commissions has been that of illegal trade unions. True, on occasion they have led mass mobilizations extending far beyond the limits of a particular occupational category. But so has the Bolivian miners federation, which for many years maintained armed workers militias. Moreover, you too make a distinction between the workers commissions and the "committees elected and subject to recall in assemblies." This is not mere formalism, since at present (as we understand it) most workers commissions are not elected, are dominated by reformist misleaders and many have even expelled militants who wished to pursue a combative class-struggle policy.

What is the capacity of the workers commission? Andrés Nin was wrong to believe that the anarchist-led CNT trade-union federation could take the place of soviets; he ignored the fact that even these combative unions were dominated by a bureaucracy and were structured in a manner such as to delay or repress the expression of the direct will of the masses. The workers commissions, in contrast, are much more fluid, incompletely coordinated and lacking the heavy weight of a massive bureaucracy such as develops in the unions under conditions of bourgeois legality. Thus the workers commissions may be *transformed* into democratic workers councils in the heat of a mass upsurge. In a similar manner shop stewards councils could have been transformed into factory committees in the course of the 1926 general strike in Great Britain.

In the United States we have fought syndicalist tendencies which see the unions as enemies of the workers because of the treacherous policy of the misleaders. In Britain during the 1973 miners strike we called for a general strike organized by the shop stewards councils, and criticized the utopianism of the International Marxist Group which sought to create "councils of action" out of thin air. A party cannot lightly break the discipline in action of the unions every time it disagrees with the policy adopted: until the outbreak of massive working-class upsurges it will necessarily focus its efforts on winning leadership of these institutions. But we do not submit ourselves *unconditionally* to the discipline of any institution beyond the party on the grounds that its "vocation" is to serve as the organic base of the united front. We must be prepared under certain circumstances to *break* the united front in order to take the struggle forward when the reformists begin to betray.

The "Revolutionary General Strike"

The Liga Comunista frequently speaks of the "Revolutionary General Strike to overthrow the Franco

dictatorship." Evidently this is intended to contrast with the CP's call for a "national strike" as some kind of act of national reconciliation; in a similar manner, the "class pact" proposed by the LCE is evidently intended to contrast with the CP's "pact for liberty." We are, of course, entirely in favor of the most effective slogans counterposing the program of class independence to the reformists' policy of class collaboration. But one must be careful in such matters not to oversimplify.

On the one hand, the slogan of a revolutionary general strike appears to be unduly specific as to the form of a revolutionary upheaval against the Franco regime. The 1934 uprising in Asturias immediately took on the form of an insurrection, for instance. In this respect, the slogan has sort of the character of a "social myth" à la Sorel. A similar example was the syndicalist slogan during World War I of a general strike against war. Of course a general strike may well be the means by which the bonapartist dictatorship is toppled.

Much more fundamentally, we are unclear as to the sense in which you use the slogan of the workers government and its relation to the general strike. On the one hand, your "strategic resolution" refers to "the formula of a government of the workers based on the organs of the general strike." This we consider a correct slogan in the event of a general strike; clearly, the task of the revolutionaries must be not only to form a central strike committee but also to give it a soviet character, transforming it into an organ of dual power and struggling to impose the rule of a government based on the democratic expression of this unitary representative organ of the independent workers movement. Such a formulation is sharply contrasted to the recent call by the Portuguese Liga Comunista Internacional (LCI) for "the imposition of a workers government within the framework of a capitalist state."

On the other hand, you write of the LCR that "It becomes ever more difficult to see, in their writings, *if they really make a distinction between the overthrow of the dictatorship and the overthrow of capitalism.*" The rejection of the slogan of a real constituent assembly, as well as the ideological use of workers control, educate the militants in the illusion that the extension of democratic committees, and even more the rise of soviets, signify that the revolutionary positions have already defeated the influence of the reformist alternatives. The transitional slogan of the workers government is ever more confused, then, with the dictatorship of the proletariat" ("The Crisis in the LCR...").

We do not have extensive documentation of the writings of the LCR which you refer to. In any case, we would oppose dropping the slogan of a constituent assembly in the Spanish context (and we repeatedly called for a democratically elected constituent assembly in Portugal in the year following the overthrow of Caetano). But we do not conceive of the call for a constituent assembly as representing some kind of intermediate stage of the revolution; in a pre-revolutionary situation, we could simultaneously call for the formation of a soviet-type unitary organization representative of the entirety of the

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The two adjacent documents were submitted in July 1973 to the pre-conference discussion of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) by supporters of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency (RIT): the "Declaration of Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 22, July 1973 and "The Fight in the United Secretariat: Reformist Appetite Versus Guerrillaist Centrism" (SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 28, July 1973).

The RIT had coalesced around the general political line of two earlier pre-convention documents written by Gerald Clark ("The Only Road to Revolution is Through the Proletariat" and "A Program for Building a Proletarian Party: In Opposition to the Centrism of the Party Majority" printed, respectively, in SWP Discussion Bulletin Vol. 31, No. 1, April 1973, and Vol. 31, No. 14, June 1973). Although partial, these two documents together presented a broad-ranging criticism of both wings of the factionally polarized "United" Secretariat (USec).

Moving swiftly to bureaucratically suppress a principled Trotskyist opposition, the reformist SWP leadership refused the RIT permission to participate in the international discussion within the USec. Although abiding by this anti-Leninist decision, the RIT supporters were summarily expelled from the SWP within a few weeks after the national conference, charged with "collaboration with the Spartacist League" (see "SWP Uses Watergate Methods Against Trotskyists," Workers Vanguard No. 29, 28 September 1973). The "proof" of this so-called "collaboration" was the testimony of four SWP members who spent days slithering in the grass near the site of an SL educational summer camp and who claim to have spied two RIT supporters.

Following his expulsion Clark (together with a member of the National Committee of the Communist League of Australia who had been expelled in September 1973 for solidarizing with the RIT) addressed an appeal to the Tenth World Congress of the USec protesting the bureaucratic expulsions of RIT supporters and demanding the circulation of RIT documents (subsequently reprinted in Spartacist [édition française] No. 6, June 1974). The appeal was denied and ignored through the common action of the SWP and the leadership of the International Majority Tendency (IMT).

One leader of the pro-IMT Internationalist Tendency (IT) of the SWP, apprehensive that theirs would be the next necks on the chopping block, registered an internal, pro-forma protest over the expulsion of Clark. Yet a year later the IT leaders carried out a no less bureaucratic purge within their own ranks, expelling two members of the IT Steering Committee who opposed the cynical wheeling and dealing between the IMT and the SWP over "reintegration" of the expelled IT members, and who had demanded an immediate break with the reformist SWP (see "IT Expels Left Oppositionists for Demanding 'Break with the SWP,'" Workers Vanguard No. 59, 3 January 1975).

Following their expulsion the supporters of the RIT joined the SL.

The Fight in the United Secretariat: Reformist Appetite vs. Guerrillaist Centrism

In the struggle within the United Secretariat, the minority, centered on the (fraternally related) SWP, represents a *reformist* tendency, approximating the pre-World War I Social Democracy, while the majority, centered on the French Ligue Communiste, is a *centrist* current presently defending insurrectionary nationalist Stalinism of the left Maoist-Guevarist variety. Both tendencies are profoundly opportunist, but with differing views as to the possibilities of realizing their opportunist appetites. In large part, these differences reflect the different political conditions in the U.S. and Western Europe. Overawed by the apparent stability of American society and the authority of its ruling class, the SWP leadership cannot conceive of attaining power except through collaboration with a section of the bourgeoisie. Thus, the dominant activity of the SWP in the past several years has been the creation of a non-electoral *popular front* in opposition to the Vietnam war (with no possibility of generating an electoral extension at present because the SWP has little to offer the powerful capitalist parties). NPAC [National Peace Action Coalition] and its predecessors were deliberately designed with a programmatic invitation to elements of the ruling class, and a few prominent Democratic Party politicians duly accepted the offer. The main reason the SWP has reversed its past enthusiastic (although platonic) advocacy of guerrilla war is that association with real guerrilla-terrorists threatens to destroy the SWP's respectability in the face of bourgeois public opinion. Would Senator Hartke or Congresswoman Abzug have joined a "coalition" with a party associated with people kidnapping U.S. business executives? This is the spectre that haunts the SWP leadership: the armed crazies in the United Secretariat will drive away our bourgeois liberal collaborators!

Existing in less stable societies, the international majority sections are more optimistic about the armed seizure of state power than is the SWP leadership, and are contemptuous of its legalistic respectability. However, the international majority is no less opportunist than the SWP leadership.

Thus Comrade Germain endorsed the fundamental line of the SWP's class collaborationist antiwar work: "The role played by the American Trotskyists in stimulating and helping to organise a mass antiwar movement in the USA expresses a similar transformation. This mass antiwar movement... became a political factor of great importance in the world relationship of forces helping the struggle of the Vietnamese revolution against the counter-revolutionary war of imperialism." (Ernest Germain, "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Volume X, Number 4, April 1973, page 41.)

By way of criticism, Comrade Germain merely observes that the SWP could also have devoted "more specific propaganda directed to a more limited vanguard, explaining the need to support the Vietnamese revolution till its final victory." (*Ibid.*, page 46.) Ah, but Vance Hartke wouldn't have liked that! It was not an accident that the SWP consistently avoided raising even a figleaf of class politics in the antiwar movement. But the international

majority, of course, was hardly in a position to criticize the SWP's class collaboration over the Vietnam war since the Ligue Communiste supported that classic and easily recognizable popular front, the Union of the Left, in the last French election. Expectedly the SWP leadership returned the favor by uncritically publicizing the Ligue's class collaboration on that occasion.

For even in order to establish erstwhile orthodox credentials, the SWP—at least while the elections were under way and illusions were high—did not attack the French section for capitulation to the *Union de la Gauche* popular front. The SWP has made popular frontism the very center of its so-called "mass" work through its major activity, the antiwar movement. The SWP's substantial numerical growth since the early 1960s has been achieved precisely through the party's immersion in the classless antiwar movement, where along with the reformist Communist Party, the SWP bears major responsibility for keeping the struggle within the bounds of the liberal capitalist framework through the "single issue" strategy. The whole purpose of this policy was the deliberate refusal to raise the *class question* of the Vietnamese revolution, and the denial of the interrelationship between struggling to sharpen the domestic class struggle and defending the Vietnamese revolution. Instead, the party prided itself on

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Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency

The present crisis of capitalism has entered into a new period. The turning point in this crisis was the August 15, 1971, policy of the United States government imposing wage controls upon the working class, and seeking as well to better its own position at the expense of the other imperialist bourgeoisies. These measures initiated a general, international crisis of bourgeois relations. The result has been a growing instability of bourgeois regimes, exacerbated by the continuing war in Southeast Asia and the rising competition in trade and a faltering monetary system.

The post-war stability of the capitalist system based upon American hegemony was first shattered in 1968 with the Vietnamese Tet offensive, which brought the Johnson administration to its knees, and this was accompanied by a wide-ranging new rise in the class struggle: the French general strike, the Czech events, followed by major upheavals in northern Italy, Poland, Ireland, Chile, and Argentina. In every part of the world—advanced capitalist countries, the deformed workers states, colonial and semicolonial nations—the class struggle has emerged with a vigor unseen since the 1930s.

The revolutionary socialist movement, small and isolated from the working class, must realize and take advantage of this new period to begin the long, uphill struggle to root our forces in the working class and prepare our cadre for the battles which are sure to come. But not to

simply proclaim to the world our proletarian character and love for the workers. No! Our strategy of penetrating the workers' organizations is based on our analysis of the deep-going crisis of leadership of the proletariat and the necessity to defeat the present misleaders who have tied the working class to the saddle of the bourgeoisie.

But so far the proletariat has refused to be whipped into line. Caught between the bourgeois parties and the traditional reformist and Stalinist misleaders, the working class struggles militantly against the attacks by capital but is unable to advance beyond the limits of bourgeois relations. Only under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard will it be possible to advance the struggle for socialism and defeat capitalism once and for all.

But the vanguard must be armed with a program which is in the interests of the proletariat and capable of organizing it for the successful conquest of power. The present leaderships of the United Secretariat and the Socialist Workers Party offer no such program. Both tendencies within the world movement offer us two forms of the same substance: political liquidationism. In the case of the SWP, liquidation into petty-bourgeois milieus and the subordination of the vanguard role of the revolutionary party to the reformist leaderships of the petty-bourgeois movements, and in the labor movement its support to government-tied reformers—like the UMW's Miller and

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RIT Declaration...

the NMU's Morrissey. In the case of the IMT [International Majority Tendency of the United Secretariat], liquidation into guerrillaism and the "new mass vanguard" of Europe, which also represents a subordination of the role of the vanguard party. Therefore, both tendencies are unsupportable.

On the international level the positions put forward in Comrade Clark's document "The Only Road to Revolution is the Proletariat," represents for us a generally correct program and strategy for building revolutionary parties throughout the world in the next period. A strategy which places the proletariat in the center of our work and the organization of a mass, democratic-centralist International, rooted in the working class and capable of leading workers in the struggle for power, as a major objective of the Trotskyist movement.

Within the United States, we are in general agreement with the line of the document "A Program for Building a Proletarian Party: In Opposition to the Centrism of the Party Majority," also authored by Comrade Clark. This document counterposes a revolutionary Marxist program and perspective to the reformist democratic program of the party majority. In opposition to the "sectoral" thesis of the party leadership, which adapts to the democratic demands of Blacks, Chicanos, women, gays, students, and labor bureaucrats, the document calls for immediate major implantation into the unions to carry out work based on the Transitional Program and the principle of class unity against capitalist exploitation. In calling for the formation of trade-union caucuses based on the Transitional Program, the document correctly poses the question within the workers' movement of who should lead the class: revolutionary socialists or the present labor lieutenants of capital. These tasks flow directly from the evaluation we had made of the present period.

The political bankruptcy of the SWP majority's program and perspectives has been clearly revealed in its stubborn clinging to a student orientation in the face of *qualitative* changes in the world situation. What is worse, the majority has dug *deeper* into this milieu the more openly the crisis of bourgeois society develops. Unable to face this reality squarely, i.e., act in a revolutionary manner, the majority resorts to a frenzied attempt to appear "orthodox" before the final curtain is raised and reveals its two-stage theory of revolution for *all* sectors of the world movement!

Yet with the present method and practice of the SWP majority, should it decide tomorrow to turn massively to a "labor orientation," as it may well be compelled to do, such an orientation could only be a reflection of its continuing practice in other arenas. The task of Leninists among all strata of the oppressed is to fuse together their struggles into the general class struggle, to transcend all narrow, partial, and therefore counterposed, aspects. Only the program and practice of revolutionary Marxism has the capacity to achieve this. Hence the centrality of a revolutionary proletarian perspective in no way excludes work in other sections of the oppressed but rather directs the thrust of such work.

Two years ago, a struggle was launched to orient the party toward the proletariat. It failed. It failed because the

comrades of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency refused to address themselves to the question of program, and underestimated the degree to which the party has retreated from genuine Trotskyism. But because these questions couldn't be avoided, a split took place in the POT within a year after the convention. Those who took up the question of program in a serious manner eventually grouped into the Leninist Faction.

But those who retreated from this question of program are now, in their majority, grouped into the Internationalist Tendency and the West-Coast Tendency. Both have declared that they are in principled agreement with the International Majority Tendency. What differences they do have with the IMT are subordinated in the interests of organizational maneuvers. Inside both the tendencies which support the IMT there are wide and divergent political views that centrifugal force will probably pull apart in the future again. Despite the many correct criticisms these tendencies make of the party's program, we cannot support them because of our principled disagreement with the program of the IMT.

The International Majority Tendency in standing for the petty-bourgeois guerrilla road in the colonial world—which even if successful could at best lead to a *deformed* workers state, and at the expense of a working-class centered revolution—has reaped with the PRT-ERP [the Argentine Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores—Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo] the inevitable consequences: that for such guerrillas, a Mao or a Castro, not a Trotsky, is their legitimate ideological hero and inspirer. In Europe, the IMT's latest fad is the phrase "new mass vanguard" and the revolution guaranteed within five years. These quick remedies are not one bit superior to the concept of "red universities" as bastions of revolution, or "from the periphery to the center," since for many years they lamentably failed to turn Stalinist and reformist bureaucrats into involuntary revolutionaries through the tactic of "deep entryism." And for the United States, the IMT has been content to endorse the whole past work of the SWP, suggesting only that it might have been given a somewhat more radical cover.

The issue of democratic centralism in the United Secretariat is a travesty of Trotskyism. Democratic centralism—internal democracy and iron front of discipline in external work—is a vital requirement for proletarian revolutionaries, no less on the international than on the national plane. In the disparity of elements in the United Secretariat whose marriage of convenience is profoundly shaken, the pretense of discipline can only alternate between centrist mockery and bureaucratic abuse.

We know that many left-wing members of the party have been drawn to the IMT because of some of its correct specific criticisms of positions of the SWP. We hope to show these elements that the concept of "the enemy of our enemy is our friend" is not always true; in fact in this case, is a destructive illusion.

On the basis of the position of this statement, we take our stance at this crucial moment in the history of our movement, and call upon all serious revolutionaries in the party to join with us.

July 12, 1973

Fight in the USec...

(continued from page 15)

being the "best builders" of impotent parades and rallies prominently featuring bourgeois politicians.

In an attempt to obscure the fundamentally popular frontist character of its antiwar work, the SWP has published in its *Education for Socialists* series two chapters from "The People's Front: The New Betrayal," written by James Burnham and published by the SWP in 1937 as its principal public declaration against the people's front. But the SWP has not republished the last chapter of Burnham's pamphlet, which describes how the Stalinists applied the people's front to the U.S., where they were not strong enough to bargain away proletarian revolution for governmental posts.

Burnham wrote: "Most significant of all is the application of the People's Front policy to 'anti-war work.' Through a multitude of pacifist organizations, and especially through the directly controlled American League Against War and Fascism, the Stalinists aim at the creation of a 'broad, classless People's Front of all those opposed to war.' The class-collaborationist character of the People's Front policy is strikingly revealed through the Stalinist attitude in these organizations. They rule out in advance the Marxist analysis of war as necessarily resulting from the inner conflicts of capitalism and therefore genuinely opposed only by revolutionary class struggle against the capitalist order and in contrast maintain that all persons, from whatever social class or group, whether or not opposed to capitalism, can 'unite' to stop war."

This Trotskyist condemnation of the popular front policy of the U.S. Stalinists reads as if it had been written specifically to describe the precise practice of the SWP in the antiwar movement—the practice which Comrade Germain finds principled!

Similarly over the question of the SWP's blatant accommodation to petty-bourgeois nationalism. Comrade Germain seeks to establish orthodox Leninist credentials for the international majority by denouncing the Canadian section and counterposing to the LSA/LSO [League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière] extensive quotations from Lenin on the difference between the right of nations to self-determination on the one hand and

nationalism—a pernicious anti-working-class ideology covering overt collaboration with the class enemy—on the other.

But when push comes to shove, Comrade Germain has nothing but fulsome praise for the SWP's abandonment of Leninism over Black and Chicano nationalism: "The analysis and projections made by 'Comrade George Breitman in that respect were among the most important creative contributions to Marxist thought realized by the world Trotskyist movement since the murder of Leon Trotsky. The conclusion was obvious: Black (and Chicano) nationalism in the United States are objectively progressive forces which revolutionary Marxists had to support, stimulate and help organise independently from the two big American bourgeois parties and from the still non-existent labour party.'" ("In Defence of Leninism...", page 43.)

Not "Armed Struggle," But Proletarian Revolution

The central revision of revolutionary Marxism by the international majority is the separation of the *class organization of an insurrection* from the society emerging from it. A revolutionary workers state, in which the working class democratically governs on the basis of collectivized property, can *only* be established if the *armed forces of the labor movement itself* play the dominant role in overthrowing the capitalist state. The insurgent peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie are necessary allies of the proletariat in socialist revolutions in backward countries. However, as Trotsky insisted again and again in his fight against Stalinism, the decisive question is whether the proletariat leads the petty bourgeoisie or vice versa. The leadership of the proletariat in a social revolution does not have a general or nebulous political or ideological form. Any bourgeois nationalist, petty-bourgeois radical or Stalinist can and often does claim to be fighting for workers power. "Proletarian leadership" is meaningless rhetoric unless extended to military dominance during an insurrection. *The leading role of the proletariat in a social revolution also means the military dominance of proletarian armed forces* (workers militias and proletarian sections of the old armed forces) *during the insurrection*. This is a fundamental principle of revolutionary Marxism. Whoever denies it is not a Trotskyist!

Where capitalism has been overthrown primarily by petty-bourgeois armed forces (Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba), what has emerged are *deformed workers states*—bureaucratic ruling castes based on collectivized (i.e., working-class) property forms. That the guerrilla road to power necessarily leads to a Stalinist regime is shown by the Cuban revolution, where the insurrectionary leadership did not begin as conscious Stalinists. Rather, the 26th of July Movement was a heterogeneous radical nationalist group originating out of the militant adventurist wing of the party of the Cuban liberal bourgeoisie (the Ortodoxo Party). However, in order to overthrow capitalism and maintain bonapartist rule of the consolidating bureaucratic caste over the Cuban working class, Castro's movement had to become a Stalinist party, merging with the wretched Cuban CP.

In a generally politically correct document, Comrade
continued on next page

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Fight in the USec...

Gerald Clark states, "By incorrectly generalizing the unusual experiences of the Cuban revolution and applying them on a continental scale in Latin America, the majority has revealed its petty-bourgeois adaptation to non-revolutionary currents in the workers movement." (Gerald Clark, "The Only Road to Revolution Is Through the Proletariat," *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 31, Number 1, April 1973, page 8.)

This statement indicates that Comrade Clark has not yet entirely transcended the theoretical framework of Pabloism. Revolutionary Marxists oppose the abandonment of "the Leninist norm of proletarian revolutions" in favor of "the Cuban road to power" not because "the Cuban road" is unlikely to succeed elsewhere—indeed, the Bolshevik revolution has not yet been repeated elsewhere—but because it necessarily produces a nationalist, anti-working-class regime. Soviet Russia in 1917-24 and Cuba (or China or Russia today) are two different types of societal organizations separated by a *political revolution*. Between Trotskyism on the one hand and Castro, Mao, Ho Chi Minh and their ilk on the other is a line of blood! They know this and so should we.

The Consistency of the Argentine PRT

The debate has centered around the politics and activities of the international majority-supported group in Argentina, the PRT (Combatiente). The international majority has simultaneously defended the PRT against minority accusations of adventurism and criticized it for Guevarist deviations.

Even when Comrade Germain seeks to demonstrate the PRT's close ties to the working class, he demonstrates just the opposite—a thoroughgoing petty-bourgeois elitism:

"The ERP detachments penetrated into some 30 factories where special conditions of repression existed and where armed factory guards of the bosses and the army terrorized the workers. They disarmed the guards, convened all the workers into general assemblies and held long discussions with them on the present stage of the class struggle in Argentina." ("In Defence of Leninism..." page 17.)

We might remind Comrade Germain that in 1949 Mao's Red Army, on a much broader scale, disarmed the repressive bourgeois army and convened (that is, ordered) the workers to assemble to hold "long discussions" with them. Revolutionary Marxists seek to replace the repressive bourgeois state apparatus with armed forces controlled by the workers movement. By contrast, the PRT seeks to replace the bourgeois state apparatus with armed petty-bourgeois bands which are not controlled by the organized working class.

The PRT's support of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and its belief in the revolutionary character of the Cuban, North Korean and Vietnamese Stalinist parties is not "inconsistency" or "theoretical eclecticism" as Comrade Germain contends. The PRT is a consistent insurrectionary Stalinist organization. It is opposed to workers democracy in the state which it is seeking to establish and it is pursuing insurrectionary methods designed to ensure military control over the working class should it come to power. It is the PRT's uneasy apologists of the international majority who are inconsistent. The international majority claims to believe that a workers state should be governed through soviet democracy, but advocates insurrectionary methods which deprive the working class of decisive military power. The kindest thing one can say of the international majority position is that it is utopian. Just as pre-Marxist socialism looked to the enlightened members of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to liberate the working class, so the interna-

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tional majority believes that enlightened and heroic petty-bourgeois guerrilla fighters will overthrow the capitalist state and magnanimously grant the working class soviet power.

The PRT seems to be rapidly moving away from the United Secretariat. This is easily understandable. Not only does it flow inevitably from the actual urban guerrilla struggle the PRT undertakes, but, as Comrade Germain has himself noted, the initiating PRT cadres who had been more "Trotskyist" have been largely exterminated. (This is the usual fate of terrorists practicing terrorism and is a sufficient comment on the international majority's approach to the difficult and lengthy task of building leadership.) Comrade Germain cannot justly disown those who engage in the "strategy" he defends when they go on to embrace the corresponding left-Stalinist ideology. Because they are fundamentally nationalist, regimes which come to power via the guerrilla road repudiate the perspective of socialist revolutions in other nations when these are an obstacle to making diplomatic deals with bourgeois states. Appropriately, Fidel Castro has evolved in a manner parallel to his onetime publicist, Comrade Hansen. Castro too once advocated guerrilla war, but now finds it "ultraleft." The Havana regime has repudiated guerrilla war in order to form an alliance with Latin American bourgeois nationalism (the Peruvian junta, the Chilean popular front, Peronism). In a like manner, Mao has endorsed capitalist counterrevolutionary terrorism in Bangladesh and Ceylon. Some Maoist-Fidelistas are repelled by the present policies of the Havana and Peking regimes. These dissident left Stalinists can only be won to Trotskyism by proving to them that the counterrevolutionary foreign policy of Havana and Peking is the organic and necessary result of the manner in which these regimes came to power: without the dominant role in the revolution being played by the working class under Trotskyist leadership. But all wings of the United Secretariat have adapted to left Maoism-Guevarism by presenting Trotskyism as a form of insurrectionary left Stalinism. This is the crime of the centrist international majority in its policies toward Argentina.

Terrorists, Guerrillas and Stalinist Bureaucrats

Much confusion exists in our movement about what Stalinism is. It is far more than an ideology, a particular political-organizational tradition, and certainly not simply a phase in the history of the USSR. Stalinism is a social phenomenon—bureaucratic rule on the basis of working-class property forms. In addition to being a reformist working-class current, Stalinism has organic roots in the urban petty bourgeoisie of the backward countries. Petty-bourgeois radical nationalists identify with and take as models the Maoists, Viet Cong and Fidelistas as people like themselves who have made good. In one of its aspects, Stalinism is a form of petty-bourgeois radical nationalism—the politics of aspiring bureaucrats.

No one should be taken in by the international majority's attempt to make a fundamental distinction between classical terrorism and contemporary guerrillaism of the ERP-Tupamaros type. Both represent the same basic political class content: the attempt by a section of the petty

bourgeoisie to overthrow the bourgeoisie and succeed it as the dominant stratum in society. Guerrillaism is nothing more than the current characteristic method of struggle by petty-bourgeois radical nationalists who in particular circumstances smoothly transform themselves into Stalinist bureaucrats.

Decades before the emergence of "Marxist-Leninist guerrillas," Trotsky pointed out the organic connection between left-wing terrorism and Stalinist bureaucracy:

*"Individual terrorism is in its very essence bureaucracy turned inside out. For Marxists this law was not discovered yesterday. Bureaucratism has no confidence in the masses and endeavors to substitute itself for the masses. Terrorism works in the same manner; it seeks to make the masses happy without asking their participation. The Stalinist bureaucracy has created a vile leader-cult, attributing to leaders divine qualities. 'Hero' worship is also the religion of terrorism, only with a minus sign. The Nikolaevs imagine that all that is necessary is to remove a few leaders by means of a revolver in order for history to take another course. Communist terrorists, as an ideological grouping, are of the same flesh and blood as the Stalinist bureaucracy." (Leon Trotsky, "The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Kirov Assassination," *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1934-35*, Pathfinder Press, page 124.)*

The SWP Leadership: For and Against the Guerrilla Road to Power

For many years, the SWP leadership was not only an ardent advocate of guerrilla war, but engaged in idiot enthusiasm over the Castro regime and Fidelista movement. The SWP's self-styled orthodox turn against guerrillaism is part of its *rightward* motion in adopting a reformist program acceptable to sections of the liberal bourgeoisie. The present arguments over which tendency has a distorted interpretation of the Ninth World Congress decisions are quite beside the point.

For the major document which in 1963 laid the basis for the SWP's unification with the European Pabloists to form the United Secretariat stated: "(13) Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasants and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries." ("For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," Statement of the Political Committee of the SWP, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 24, Number 29, April 1963, page 39. Also quoted in "On the Disputed Questions in the Fourth International: A Brief Summary," by C. Howard (IMG), *SWP Internal Information Bulletin*, Number 3 in 1973, June 1973, page 25.)

Interestingly, at that same time the oppositional tendency which later became the Spartacist League produced the following explicit counterposition on

continued on next page

Fight in the USec...

guerrilla war: "(15) Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decayed imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in the colonial countries.' Marxists must resolutely oppose any adventurist acceptance of the peasant-guerrilla road to socialism—historically akin to the Social Revolutionary program on tactics that Lenin fought. This alternative would be a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for the adventurers." ("Towards Rebirth of the Fourth International—Draft Resolution on the World Movement," submitted for the Minority by Shane Mage, James Robertson and Geoffrey White, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 24, Number 26, June 1963, page 16.)

It might now appear that the SWP majority has capitulated to Spartacism on the guerrilla war question! Such a view however would be inverted. The SWP leadership's present opposition to guerrillaism flows directly from its reformist appetites, not simply from opposition to a tactically adventurist policy. The Spartacist tendency, while condemning tactical adventurism, opposed guerrilla war primarily because of its class content and the type of regime which emerges from it if successful.

To the international majority's "strategy of armed struggle," the SWP leadership has counterposed "the strategy of the Leninist method of party building." Taken in an abstract and isolated way, the term "Leninist method of party building" is meaningless and not distinct from the Kautskyan conception of party building by the old German Social Democracy. It is deliberately designed to avoid consideration of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state. And the SWP leadership wants to avoid such a discussion because, at bottom, it is opposed to the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist state.

The strongest weapon each side in the international discussion possesses is the obvious departure from Trotskyism by the other side. Thus the international minority can denounce the PRT for Guevarism—but only by glossing over the SWP's years-long panegyrics to Castro and Che. It can denounce the Bolivian POR [Partido Obrero Revolucionario] (Gonzales) for joining the FRA [Frente Revolucionario Anti-Imperialista] under a "common bourgeois program" but this is pure hypocrisy for the enthusiasts of the single-issue reformist NPACs and WONAACs [Women's National Abortion Action Coalition]. Only those at a great distance from the practice of the

SWP can take these cynical protestations of orthodoxy as good coin. Similarly, those who can write approvingly of the European sections for a presumed proletarian orientation are simply naive if they are not willfully blind.

To take one example: "While the SWP leadership interpreted the aborted French revolution as a reaffirmation of their intercontinental-wide student strategy, the European comrades absorbed the true lessons: the importance of being able to challenge the Stalinists and reformists inside the workers movement." ("Statement of Support to the International Majority Tendency," by Ralph Levitt *et al.*, *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, Volume 31, Number 11, June 1973, page 3.) In fact the entire thrust of the Ligue Communiste's "from the periphery to the center" strategy is the thesis that the party can conquer the crucial sections of the proletariat by working through marginal and petty-bourgeois sectors, precisely without having to confront the entrenched Stalinist and Social-Democratic leaderships of the organized workers movement. Similarly, the international majority's protestations of outrage at the Canadian section's line on nationalism in English Canada and Quebec are exposed as empty posturing in the light of the European sections' own capitulatory positions on the "Arab revolution," the IRA, the Vietnamese Stalinists, and all the rest.

Conclusion

The SWP leadership is in its working program committed to a legalistic perspective based on class collaboration as that which flowered in Kautskyan Social Democracy. Only the absence of a *mass* base in the trade-union bureaucracy, labor aristocracy, and "progressive" petty bourgeoisie separates the SWP from classic Social Democracy. The SWP's present "orthodox" attack on guerrilla adventurism is, in reality, a frightened reaction to the threat posed by the international majority line to disrupt the acquisition of such a mass base by the SWP, i.e., it is based upon the SWP's own opposition to the revolutionary overthrow of the state. The international majority is a genuine centrist swamp. Whatever the subjective revolutionary intentions of some of them, its denizens range from the thoroughly corrupt union bureaucrats of the Ceylonese LSSP(R) [Lanka Sama Samaj Party (Revolutionary)] to the workerist secretaries of the British IMG [International Marxist Group]. The international majority is currently defending a policy of insurrectionary nationalist Stalinism which denies the leading role of the proletariat in social revolution as concretized in the military dominance of workers militias during the insurrection. The Fourth International as Trotsky conceived it—a democratic-centralist revolutionary proletarian international—can only emerge through implacable struggle against the reformism of the minority and the centrism of the majority tendency.

July 9, 1973

**The above contribution is not a document of or does not necessarily express the views of the other members of the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency. [Footnote in the original.]*

Liga Comunista...

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organized workers. As to the call for a workers government, we raise this as a call for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is possible that a workers government might arise in a dual power situation and would be transitional in the sense of not yet having imposed a single proletarian state power against the rule of capital. But we warn sharply against any attempt to turn the slogan of the workers government into a call for the working-class parties to administer the capitalist state (as both the majority and minority of the USec do) in the guise of being a tactical application of the algebraic slogan. Particularly in a general strike situation, the task of the workers government must be to suppress the capitalist state apparatus. Any attempt to take it over (as in Germany in November 1918, when an SPD-USPD government took over the bourgeois state with the "support" of the reformist-dominated workers councils) must mean a bloody suppression of the workers in the streets. While there may be, in the event, a separation in time between the overthrow of the dictatorship and the overthrow of capitalism, the communists must always put forward the demand for the overthrow of capitalism rather than some kind of stagist concept (first the overthrow of the Franco dictatorship by a general strike, then a struggle against capitalist rule).

"Democratic Control of the Army"

In this respect, a slogan which has appeared in several publications of the LCE, for "democratic control of the army" as a task of the workers government, seems dangerously misleading. In some cases you have phrased this as "democratic control by soldiers committees," but in either case it tends to equate the situation of the state apparatus with industrial production in the factories. We do not call for workers control of the bourgeois state apparatus (much less "democratic" control); rather, our task is to smash it. Likewise, the task of the soldiers committees is to destroy—not control—the bourgeois army.

Trotsky trenchantly criticized this dangerous view in a polemic against the POUM's "thirteen points for victory" during the Spanish civil war:

"The fourth point proclaims: 'For the creation of an army controlled by the working class'.... The army is a weapon of the ruling class and cannot be anything else. The army is controlled by whoever commands it, that is, by whoever holds state power. The proletariat cannot 'control' an army created by the bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys. The revolutionary party can and must build its cells in such an army, preparing the advanced sections of the army to pass over to the side of the workers."

—"Is Victory Possible?" April 1937

Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

We have sought to lay out briefly our views on subjects where there seem to be major areas of disagreement between the international Spartacist tendency and the Liga Comunista of Spain. Unfortunately we cannot take up all topics at once. In order to obtain a more complete

presentation of our positions on fundamental questions facing the workers movement, we refer you to the documents collected in *Cuadernos Marxistas* No. 1. And we invite a reply by the LCE.

In fighting for the rebirth of the Fourth International, the international Spartacist tendency not only rejects the fraudulent claims of the various impostors who today claim to be the FI. We also counterpose a fundamentally different concept of building the world party of socialist revolution, contrasting with Healy's "International Committee," whose phony "dialectics" serve only to mask a constantly changing line and whose only principle is unconditional submission to the Führer principle; with the OCI's "Organizing Committee," whose sole basis is abstract acceptance of the Transitional Program and agreement that it has "The Continuity"; and most especially with the "United" Secretariat, which seems to have as its only criterion for membership affirmation of the myth that it is the Fourth International.

Because we struggle to crystallize a politically homogeneous and authentically Trotskyist democratic-centralist international tendency, Mandel accuses the Spartacist tendency of trying to build a "monolithic" International (as he did in Australia last September) and Alain Krivine accuses us of equating democratic centralism with "helmets and truncheons" (a speech in Toronto in July 1974). We would point out, however, that it is the Mandels, Hansens and Krivines who have repeatedly expelled principled left oppositionists from their organizations, while simultaneously covering up the betrayals of their own factional partners (the case of Bala Tampoe, for instance). Our tendency is not "monolithic"—it is however founded on a principled basis of programmatic congruence.

The swamp of the "United Secretariat" cannot be reformed. From the very beginning its program has been based on Pabloist revisionism, committed to chasing after an endless succession of petty-bourgeois misleaders. As this putrescent bloc decomposes at an accelerated rate into wings which want either to capitulate to Guevarist youth or to become the mainstream social-democratic party of their country, the task of principled Trotskyists is *not* to seek unity of all those opposed to the dominant tendencies in the USec. The bankruptcy of this approach was graphically demonstrated by the ill-fated "Third Tendency," which could not agree on a common document until days before the "10th World Congress" and then fell apart immediately afterwards. Rather, it is only by fighting to build an authentic Trotskyist international tendency based on real political agreement that the Fourth International can be reformed. ■

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Trotskyist Faction...

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aggressive political confrontation with ostensibly Trotskyist groups. But the NII [Necessary International Initiative] is by no means an "instrument" of such policies, rather it constitutes a barrier to programmatic regroupment. The NII is neither an open forum for discussion nor a democratic-centralist international tendency. Since its formation the NII has been carrying out common propagandistic work (Portugal) and includes a mutual "non-aggression pact"—the questions where there are political differences are passed over in silence to outsiders (and to a large extent internally as well). The call for discussion at the conclusion of the NII [document] expresses its character as a rotten bloc: "all those who accept the spirit of this general statement should participate." It is not *program* which is the basis of participation, but rather a *feeling* of mutual ties—not excluding state capitalists, for example, though it does exclude elements which stand on Trotsky's Transitional Program.

The NII is a confused conglomeration of left-Pabloist groups which have gotten together on the basis of standing somewhere to the left of the USec majority and to the right of the iSt. What *truly unites* the NII (as opposed to Bender's scholastic exegeses of its "spirit") is: 1. rejection of the Transitional Program of 1938 as the program of the imperialist epoch; 2. a defeatist position on the split in the Fourth International in 1952-54; 3. support for petty-bourgeois nationalists (for example, in Angola: "For the Victory of the MPLA," *Spartacus* No. 22; Lebanon, Palestine); 4. electoral support to workers parties in popular fronts (Chile in 1970, France in 1973/74, Pato in Portugal, the "historic compromise" in Italy).

The superfluous character of the NII becomes evident in its contradictory stance toward the USec. Whereas the Spartacusbund declared at the time of the Fifth NC that it wanted to smash the USec politically, Roberto wanted (wants?) to reform it. In any case he weeps bitter tears for the dead and gone "Third Tendency" of the USec (report on the meeting of the Joint Commission of the NII on 2 November 1976 in Paris, p. 1). The position of the Matgama group (I-CL [International-Communist League]) toward the USec is downright impenetrable—after years of "critical support" to the USec its present position is: "The I-CL continues to believe that the USFI is the main stream that has emerged from the communist tendency personified by Leon Trotsky" ("The I-CL and the Fourth International," p. 6).

OUT OF THE ROTTEN NII BLOC, THE NII IS A BARRIER WHICH MUST BE SMASHED!

The Trotskyist Faction fights for a policy of aggressive regroupment on the basis of a clear Trotskyist program. In basing our politics on the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Comintern and on the founding documents of the Fourth International, we recognize the further programmatic development of the proletarian world revolution on principled bases—an historical development proceeding from the revolutionary phases of the international world parties of the proletariat.

This statement is directed at all Trotskyist elements in the Spartacusbund. By our analyses we shall demonstrate

to these comrades that the defeats of the Spartacusbund, in particular in respect to its present main task, the construction of the party of proletarian world revolution, are not tactical/episodic but rather derive from its programmatic confusion, from its understanding of programmatic particularism, which continue to unambiguously stamp it as a centrist organization from a typical model.

Clarity in the following points is central to a Trotskyist orientation:

I. The Transitional Program is the program of proletarian world revolution in our epoch. The document springs from the Marxist methodology in analyzing the present historical period. Hence the basic conclusions stemming from it have a necessary political and organizational form and constitute the foundations of our strategy and tactics.

We thus reject all suggestions which take the "destruction" of the program of the Fourth International as the basis for political work and which therefore must inevitably lead to a revision of the Trotskyist program. The organizations of the NII, which are by no means of one mind as to *when* the Transitional Program became inadequate and *how* it is to be "reconstructed," express only their common revisionist appetites when they adopt this position.

II. On the one hand the "popular front," on the other fascism—these are the last means of imperialism *against* proletarian revolution. The program and politics of such a coalition government are never anything but bourgeois through and through. We thus reject all tactical maneuvering vis-à-vis such coalitions, precisely because the class line passes not through but rather outside "popular fronts."

We explicitly reject every form of electoral support for parties or groups taking part in, or directly working toward, a "popular front." Only a break with the bourgeois "allies" may make such critical support for reformist or revisionist workers organizations possible. The FMR (Roberto's electoral support ("Vote red," printed without criticism in *Spartacus* No. 29) for the "repulsive class collaboration of the PCI [Communist Party of Italy]" (*ibid.*) is merely the last in a long series of capitulations vis-à-vis pop fronts. The dividing line between Bolshevism and Menshevism is, as Trotsky wrote, drawn by one's attitude toward popular fronts.

III. The social-democratic and Stalinist parties are in their essence simultaneously bourgeois and proletarian. These parties are particularly characterized by the antagonism between the proletarian class and a traditional leadership, between the working-class rank and file and the worker bureaucracy. Hence the Stalinist, as well as the social-democratic, parties are currents in the workers movement with a twofold character. They are simultaneously bourgeois and workers parties—or in Lenin's words, "bourgeois workers parties."

The additional ties of Stalinist parties to the "worker bureaucracies" of the deformed or degenerated workers states do not in principle alter the *quality* of this definition, since these bonapartist bureaucracies are channels for bourgeois influence on the workers movement (the Stalinist parties' severing of ties with these state bureaucracies—as in Spain, France and Italy—is ex-

pressed as a process of their transformation into national reformist parties). On no point are the positions of the NIL groups more contradictory than on the question of reformism. Though the Spartacusbund (see Tanas, *Ergebnisse und Perspektiven* No. 2) made a qualitative distinction between the SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany] as a "bourgeois" party ("based on support by the workers") and Stalinist workers parties, this position is contradicted by their being qualitatively equated in the NIL [document] (which speaks of the "counterrevolutionary role of reformist parties...., [whether] Stalinist or social-democratic"). The I-CL practices entrism in the Labour Party and gave "critical support" to Anthony Benn (as a "Labour left") in the election of the BLP's new candidate for prime minister.

IV. We use the slogan of the workers government in the sense in which it was understood by the Bolsheviks in 1917 and by the Fourth International in its founding documents. Accordingly it is an anti-bourgeois, anti-capitalist slogan, in which the need for the proletariat to seize power by its own means is unambiguously expressed. All the slogans of the Transitional Program, i.e., our entire revolutionary strategy and tactics, give the slogan of the workers government only one single concrete meaning, namely, as the popular term for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Spartacusbund's fatal misunderstanding of this slogan emerges most brutally in its demand for Spain, where a (PCE/PSOE [Communist Party/Socialist Party]) "workers government" brought to power by a general strike is supposed to convene a Constituent Assembly (*Spartacus* No. 23). This slogan is identical with the demand that the working class should, after a successful uprising, hand over power to the "democratic" counter-revolution (and offers a close analogy to events in Germany in 1918-19, where an uprising placed power in the hands of the Ebert-Scheidemann "workers government"—as the Spartacusbund understands the term—which then, after smashing the revolutionary workers movement, proceeded to convene the National Assembly).

V. The Trotskyist Faction supports the right of all nations to national self-determination. But in so doing there can be no question of politically supporting petty-bourgeois nationalist liberation movements; instead one must carry out the military struggle against repressive imperialist measures in common with them—under one's own flag. In no case do we give our military support in order to play off a "more progressive" nationalist movement against other petty-bourgeois nationalist groups or even to assist them to power through our military support.

Concerning military support against imperialist conquest, we are in every case guided by the viewpoint that in the last analysis the working class can come to power only when it has dealt with its own bourgeoisie. The recognition that the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders of today—if victorious—are the national bourgeoisie of tomorrow excludes our support for one bourgeois-nationalist faction against another, since the sole question is *who* will stabilize a bourgeois-nationalist regime. From the standpoint of the historical interests of the working class every nationalism is *reactionary*.

VI. The organizational form of a Trotskyist party is

inseparably linked to its programmatic clarity and consists in practicing democratic centralism in line with the Bolshevik-Leninist conception (codified in the Resolution on the Organization Question of the Third World Congress of the Comintern); hence it must be recognized from the beginning as a principle to be applied internationally. The principle of democratic centralism means the most complete freedom of discussion internally, along with a complete unity of action externally. We decisively reject using "external freedom of criticism" to appeal to backward elements of the working class standing outside the Marxist organization in order to mobilize these elements against other sections of the Marxist Vanguard.

VII. We recognize that a currently embryonic party organization must necessarily constitute itself in the form of a "fighting propaganda group" in order, by destroying ostensibly revolutionary organizations, to initiate and/or drive forward a regroupment process in order thereby to build up one's own organization.

In doing so the character of this work must always be regarded as exemplary, rejecting out of hand any voluntaristic notion of intervening as a propaganda group into all the daily struggles of the working class, inasmuch as this would lead to dissipating one's own forces and to liquidating the program.

VIII. The Trotskyist Faction advocates the principle of the united front tactic, according to which complete freedom of criticism must be preserved in each action carried out jointly with other organizations. We reject every form of common propaganda with other organizations. We consistently apply the principle of unity in a given *action*, which must have a short term and practical goal corresponding to the method of "march separately, strike together." Both the bloc with Quicuchi [leader of a small Angolan group much touted by the Spartacusbund] and the common struggle of all workers organizations "against the police state and repression" (defensive-offensive alliance) contradict this Leninist concept and imply a common understanding of the strategy and tactics of proletarian class defense.

IX. Implanting the organization in the working class through factory and trade-union work must be carried out without any restrictions at the programmatic level and, at the present stage of constructing the party, can be carried out only in an exemplary fashion if one is not to succumb to the impressionist pressure of possible resulting social relationships, such as wishing to lead or initiate struggles in a given plant or trade union without having constructed a leadership there as the instrument of the party.

"Communists always and everywhere advocate the historical tasks of the proletariat as opposed to all particular interests, under some circumstances even without, or in opposition to, large sections of the working class and its organizations."

—Resolution of the Fifth National Congress of the Spartacusbund

The Trotskyist Faction is fighting for support to the above platform, the dividing line between revolutionary Trotskyism and Menshevism.

Berlin, 14 December 1976

Spartacusbund Expels Left Opposition

Trotskyist Faction Fuses with TLD

Reprinted below is the founding document of the Trotskyist Fraction (TF) of the German Spartacusbund. When confronted by a principled Trotskyist opposition at their sixth national conference in January 1977, the Spartacusbund centrists bureaucratically expelled the TF solely for refusing to repudiate its political positions and to "recognize completely the authority of the past and future leadership of the Spartacusbund" (see "Trotskyist Faction Expelled by Spartacusbund," Workers Vanguard No. 142, 28 January 1977).

Originating as a left split from the German section of the United Secretariat (USec) in 1969-70 the Spartacusbund never definitively broke with central tenets and traditions of Pabloist revisionism, despite its short-lived binge of self-criticism and left-sounding anti-Pabloism begun at the fifth national conference in August 1975. Foundering in centrist disorientation, and increasingly beset by severe demoralization (losing half its membership during the past year), the disintegrating Spartacusbund in March 1976 cast its lot with the so-called "Necessary International Initiative" (NII), a left-of-the-USec rotten bloc brokered by the Italian Frazione Marxista Rivoluzionaria (now renamed Lega Comunista) and also including the Austrian Internationale Kommunistische Liga and the British International-Communist League.

As the TF document demonstrates, the NII conglomerate has little in common beyond similar appetites for opportunist maneuvers with the USec and mutual antipathy for the authentic Trotskyism upheld by the international Spartacist tendency. Although at odds with one another over a range of crucial issues the centrist groups lashed together in the NII share a Pabloist methodology which finds its fullest expression in their rejection of the Transitional Program; the NII document claims that both the Fourth International and the Trotskyist program were "destroyed" during World War II and consequently must be "reconstructed" anew.

Following their expulsion from the Spartacusbund the comrades of the TF began extensive political discussions with the Troztskistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the international Spartacist tendency. At the beginning of February 1977 the two organizations fused.

The Fifth National Conference stated: "The Spartacusbund must break radically with its nationally limited past..." This desire to break with the "national Trotskyism" of the early Spartacusbund (and of the KJO [Kommunistischen Jugendorganisation] and BL [Spartacus/Bolschewiki-Leninisten]) was a positive impulse—as was the stated wish to put an end to the

"practice of unprincipled propaganda blocs" and to "politics beneath the level of the Transitional Program," which also found expression in the "Resolution of the Fifth NC" (Spartacus No. 19, August 1975).

Such a break with the practice of the past was and is particularly pressing in view of genuine possibilities for a Trotskyist regroupment on an international scale. In the period after the Tenth World Congress there occurred a number of "cold" splits, after effects of the Chilean defeat, between the European-led majority of the USec [United Secretariat of the Fourth International—USFI] and the SWP [Socialist Workers Party]-led minority (Argentina, Australia, Canada, USA, etc.). In addition, the international "Third Tendency" for the most part dissolved: elements of it have capitulated to the majority (as with the Kompass tendency in the GIM [Groupe Internationale Marxisten]), have gone over to the SWP faction (parts of "Tendency Four" in the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire] and parts of the Italian FMR [Frazione Marxista Rivoluzionaria]) or have either split or been expelled (the Roberto wing of the FMR, etc.). Finally, groupings from the USec have gone over to the iSt, as with a wing of the FMR, several groupings from the LCR, etc.

At present the opportunities for programmatic regroupment are perhaps even more favorable than last year. The Maoist Stalinists have been plunged into a process of political fermentation by the events in China and are obviously beginning to fragment. In the course of the year the SWP-PST [Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores] bloc has broken up and the general crisis of the USec has intensified (Mandel announces his willingness to put aside "labels" like the "Fourth International" should his revisionist appetites demand this). Since its support for Mitterrand in 1974, the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste] has been moving rapidly to the right: it is casting amorous eyes at the SWP, publishes its weekly paper *Informations Ouvrières* not as a party organ but rather as a "free tribune of class struggle" and is increasingly incapable of drawing the class line in its solidarity campaigns for those being politically persecuted in East Europe (the reformist IAK [Internationale Arbeiter Korrespondenz], without a tradition and base, merely presents the opportunist tendencies of the Lambertistes in a particularly crass form). The Healyites are sinking lower than ever before with their gangster tactics, their slanders of Hansen and Novack, their celebration of Libyan "socialism," and the fact that they have been able to set up their national office in Essen can be ascribed only to the pitiful weakness of the Spartacusbund.

This situation requires an international tactic of

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Class Opposition to Popular Fronts—Key to Revolutionary Regroupment

Chilean OTR Fuses with Spartacist Tendency

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9 September 1977

The 1977 European summer camp of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) witnessed a fusion which is unique in the history of the iSt and of considerable interest and significance to would-be revolutionists throughout the world. The Organización Trotskista Revolucionaria (OTR) of Chile united with the iSt, and is now the Chilean sympathizing section of our common tendency. While the proportions on both sides are modest, this fusion represents a ringing affirmation and confirmation of Trotsky's 1935 remark that: "In reality, the Popular Front is the main question of Proletarian class strategy for this epoch." The OTR and iSt met on the common terrain of militant class opposition to bourgeois popular frontism, and it was by generalizing this position of proletarian independence to all major international questions that a joining of our forces became possible and necessary.

For the iSt this fusion marks a significant extension of our tendency, as it is the first Latin American section. It thus represents the addition of an important body of revolutionary experience to a movement previously limited to sections in North America, Europe and Australasia. For the OTR it signifies the overcoming of national isolation and the culmination of its break with Pabloism begun some years before. While holding firm to their opposition to popular frontism, the Chilean comrades have proven capable of uncompromisingly reevaluating their past views in the light of international experience, the indispensable precondition for assimilating authentic Leninism. For anyone familiar with the continental parochialism and rampant revisionism of Latin American "Trotskyism," this is a tremendous achievement.

But the central significance of the OTR/iSt fusion is to underline the Trotskyist analysis of the popular front, the tying of the working masses to "progressive" capitalists—or even "phantom" capitalists (provincial lawyers and the like) when the real bourgeoisie in its entirety has staked its existence on the triumph of naked reaction—with the purpose of preventing a proletarian uprising against all wings of the bourgeois class enemy. A tragically prophetic article in *Spartacist* in the fall of 1970 warned that the Allende coalition, the Unidad Popular (UP), was a popular front such as in France, Spain and Chile during the 1930's, and must be resolutely opposed by proletarian revolutionists. At a time when millions of Chileans and leftists throughout the world were hailing the "*compañero presidente*" and talking of a second Cuba, we wrote: "Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."

In reality, this seemingly prescient statement was neither especially original nor did it require a crystal ball. We were simply repeating the lesson of Spain, acting as any Leninist party should, as the memory of the working class. It would seem to be the ABC of Trotskyism, yet every other international tendency which claims that heritage managed to obscure or directly deny the popular-front character of the Allende regime.

Within Chile, the groups to the left of the Communist and Socialist parties were disoriented by the 1970 UP election victory. The most notorious case was that of the Castroite MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Movement of the Revolutionary Left) which flip-flopped from guerrillaist opposition to participation in

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Pinochet coup; but unlike those who seek to reconstruct the decimated MIR, or the USec majority which is mainly concerned to cover its own tracks of total support to Guevarist guerrillism, the OTR has drawn the lessons of the terrible defeat represented by September 11 and proclaimed the bankruptcy of guerrillism in all its varieties.

Leninism on the Organization Question

In Chile the OTR lacked Leninist organizational norms: the definition of membership was fluid, it never had a party press, etc. This organizational practice was naturally maintained in exile, where the pressures toward a "circle spirit" among a small band of survivors are enormous. Nevertheless, as the OTR evolved toward the Spartacist tendency this, equally naturally, led to internal struggles and splits. These are, however, difficult to resolve without assimilating and applying the Leninist norms of democratic centralism. It was problems centering around the organization question that for some months held up the fusion perspective that had been voted in May 1976 and which dominated the activity of the OTR in the last year. As Cde. Ivan of the OTR put it in a presentation to a meeting of the International Executive Committee (IEC) of the iSt at the 1977 European summer camp:

"The OTR was an organization in exile and dispersed over various continents. Basically there were two questions which impeded fusion last year. One was the organizational weakness of the OTR, which as a result led us to a federative concept of the party. But behind this was an important political point, and that is that the OTR hoped to unite its central cadre in Europe. We had difficulties in bringing about a joint development of all our cadre, and the European nucleus did not have a Leninist methodology to overcome this problem."

The difficulties centered on the struggle to win over an important member of the leadership who had only recently arrived from Latin America. Finding himself cut off from a base and confined to the limitations of a small Trotskyist propaganda nucleus, this comrade began elaborating plans

behind the backs of the leadership; acts of organizational indiscipline soon led to an open political break, as he failed to defend the OTR program publicly, breaking explicit instructions. As the OTR reporter noted in his presentation to the IEC:

"...in the final analysis Cde. Blas presented a perspective which was counterposed to Trotskyism and to Lenin's concept of the party, basing himself on the argument that we can't break our ties with the masses.... Thus in practice he was in effect of defending the entirety of the communist program...."

"A few days ago this process came to an end, and in a task carried out in full consultation with the comrades from the International we formalized Blas' split from the Trotskyist program.... For the OTR, the most important thing in this process was that the break with our past methodology opened the path to genuine Leninism."

An Iskra Perspective

The OTR now faces tremendous opportunities and responsibilities. The Chilean bonapartist junta, lacking a significant social base of support and having been unable to atomize the proletariat and wipe out its leadership, will not last even as long as the Brazilian military dictatorship. In the meantime, those leftists who survived the bloodbath have been concentrated in large numbers in exile centers in Europe and Latin America. Here there is an extraordinary opportunity to reach tens of thousands of committed militants and to challenge the left to seriously draw a balance sheet of the Allende regime. This is by no means limited to Chilean militants, for the Chilean experience has global importance and is *decisive* for the formation of revolutionary nuclei in the key countries of Latin America.

Among those who reject the popular front, Stalinism, social democracy and guerrillism a dialogue could be initiated. Through polemical combat the superiority of the Trotskyist analysis and program can be demonstrated, and the core of an authentic Leninist propaganda group forged and politically prepared for the tasks which will face it when the bloody Pinochet dictatorship falls and the crucial battle to break the working class from the reformists begins in earnest.

Key to this perspective is the question of the press. In the coming period the principal voice for the OTR will be the Spanish edition of *Spartacist*, to be published three times a



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year, whose editorial board now includes members of the OTR. This is intended to be an *Iskra*-type publication, including polemics and analyses directed primarily at the Latin American exile milieu and to leftists in the Iberian peninsula. In addition the OTR will work toward the initiation of its own press, beginning in a modest format and with irregular frequency. Along with the struggle to build a solid, programmatically united and politically homogeneous organization in exile will naturally come the difficult task of attempting to get this press into the hands of the militants of the Chilean working class wherever they are.

In all this, as a member of a democratic-centralist international tendency, the OTR will count on the full political support and all possible material assistance of the iSt. But there is no denying that the demands are enormous and our total resources qualitatively inadequate. However, the OTR has an important political capital which cannot be minimized: unlike the pseudo-Trotskyists, it represents a coherent and powerful political line which was, tragically, proven correct by the demise of the deadly popular front.

Chile 1970-73 has had an impact on the political development of the current revolutionary generation similar to that of the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930's. The Trotskyists who warned that the popular front was leading to a bloody massacre should recall their warnings to educate those who did not heed them at the time but desire to avoid a repeat of the holocaust. Yet Mandel's USec and the OCI's "Organizing Committee" *hide* their Chilean groups rather than highlighting them—and for good reason: *they did not issue such warnings but instead apologized for the popular front.*

We are still weak as a political force, but the strength and promise of the OTR/iSt fusion—what enabled these militants to cross the tremendous gulf from Pabloism, workerism, Guevarism to Trotskyism—comes from the fact that it is built on fundamental Marxist principles:

"To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International."■

Declaration of Fraternal Relations between the international Spartacist tendency and the Organización Trotskista Revolucionaria of Chile

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28 May 1976

I

The events of 1970 to 1973 in Chile posed, and continue to pose, a fundamental test of the revolutionary capacity of all who claim to speak in the historic interests of the working class. The self-proclaimed socialists who bound the exploited masses to the "constitutionalist" officers and "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie through the Popular Unity (UP) coalition acted as a roadblock to revolution, and therefore an accomplice of counterrevolution. The first task of those who would prepare a proletarian insurrection to sweep away the bourgeois state, today in the hands of the blood-drenched Pinochet dictatorship, must be to draw the lessons of the Allende popular front. Only in this manner can the masses be broken from their treacherous reformist and centrist misleaders who paved the way for the coup of 11 September 1973. At that time the bourgeois popular front was replaced by another form of capitalist rule, the bonapartist military junta, which balances between the fractions and cliques of the middle and big bourgeoisie, reflecting the pressure of the major imperialist powers.

Already in late 1970 the Spartacist tendency warned:

"It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the

way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."

Tragically, there was no Trotskyist party in Chile to galvanize the workers around the Marxist program of class independence, and the *Spartacist* warning proved all too accurate.

II

As Trotsky remarked in 1935: "In reality, the Popular Front is the *main question of Proletarian class strategy* for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism."

The largest purportedly revolutionary organization formally outside the UP coalition, the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), was incapable of presenting a class opposition to the popular front. While attracting a layer of militant youth fundamentally from the petty bourgeoisie, and periodically criticizing the Communist Party (CP), the MIR never broke from the Popular Unity. Following the September 1970 elections it called on the masses to support Allende; today the MIR is part of the popular front in exile, seeking to "broaden" the class-collaborationist coalition by including even Christian Democrats. The individual heroism of many MIR militants cannot hide the political bankruptcy of these Chilean Castroites, the left cover of the popular front.

Nor did the Chilean disciples of the several self-

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ist/OTR Declaration of Fraternal Relations...

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proclaimed "Fourth Internationals" present a Trotskyist policy of irreconcilable hostility to popular frontism. The sympathizers of the "United" Secretariat (USec) were either mired in perpetual "deep entry" in the Socialist Party (the traditional graveyard for pseudo-Trotskyists in Chile) or fawningly crawling after the MIR. (In fact, the USec played a central role in creating the MIR, but this did not prevent the Castroites from summarily expelling them two years later for "Trotskyism." Such are the rewards of opportunism!) The USec supporters labeled the bourgeois elements of the UP irrelevant, alibiing the Allende regime with the label "reformist" and calling on it to carry out its own bourgeois program.

As for the two Chile groups adhering to the "Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International" led by the French OCI, neither of them characterized the UP as a popular front until after the Pinochet coup; and the minuscule Posadista group considered the Allende regime as a "revolutionary government," a category in which it also includes the military juntas of Peru and Panama.

III

However, some militants in Chile did seek to oppose the class collaboration of the two dominant reformist, or as Lenin said, bourgeois workers parties (Communist and Socialist). In late 1972, elements of the TRO (Revolutionary October Tendency, allied with the reformist international minority of the USec) refused to go along with a fusion with the FRT (Revolutionary Trotskyist Front, led by L. Vitale and allied with the centrist USec majority) because of the failure to resolve (or even discuss) differences on Cuba and guerrillaism, and the lack of a revolutionary policy toward the UP. Consequently, this grouping was immediately expelled by the central committee elected at the founding congress of the PSR (Revolutionary Socialist Party) amid charges of "ultra-leftism."

The expelled tendency, which became the Revolutionary Trotskyist Organization (OTR), includes among its central leadership trade unionists with many years of experience leading struggles of the Chilean miners, both against the U.S. monopolies and state agencies of the Chilean bourgeoisie. Having broken with the SP, in the March 1973 legislative elections they called for votes to the Popular Socialist Union (USOPO), a split-off from the SP, while giving it no political confidence. Although the USOPO leaders were reformists, they had been forced to break with the popular front because of leftist opposition among copper miners (its base) to the UP. Shortly before the Pinochet coup leaders of the OTR were at the head of a workers march in Santiago demanding "break with the bourgeoisie."

Subsequently, in a document approved by its congress in October 1974, "A Political Defeat and the Need for a Balance Sheet," the OTR wrote:

"To say that the character of the UP was reformist means being an accomplice to the betrayals committed.... Thus the

UP must be included in the list of the old popular fronts, the model designed to betray the working class."

IV

At the time of the shotgun wedding which formed the PSR in November 1972, the tendency which became the Revolutionary Trotskyist Organization of Chile had already experienced the unprincipled maneuvering of the competing factions of the USec. In exile, the OTR came into direct contact with the United Secretariat leadership. Although invited to the USec's "Tenth World Congress," it was informed that there would be no discussion on Chile! This was only logical for a fake-International which had formally declared the Allende regime a popular front in 1971, while none of its sympathizing groups in Chile ever held this position; and then, following the 1973 coup, posthumously rehabilitated the UP to the status of "reformist." Clearly any honest balance sheet of the Chilean events could only be a condemnation of the USec's own opportunism and failure to present a revolutionary opposition to class collaboration.

The OCI, like the USec, had termed the Allende regime a popular front (although not taking the decisive step of calling for electoral opposition to *all* the parties of the UP coalition) while its Chilean supporters failed to make this characterization. In discussions with the OCI, the OTR sharply rejected the former's call for a vote for Mitterrand (candidate of the popular-front Union of the Left in the 1974 French presidential elections) and opposed the OCI policy of tailing after the Portuguese Socialist Party. In 1971, after playing a fundamental role in frustrating chances for a Bolivian revolution by its capitulatory centrist policies, the OCI's main Latin American ally, the POR of G. Lora, concluded a political pact with the ousted Bolivian ex-president, General Torres. Subsequently the OCI has called for extending this alliance with the "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie to a continental scale—a Latin American super-Kuomintang. Such treacherous policies demonstrate the appetites of these pseudo-Trotskyists to commit betrayals as monstrous as those of the Chilean SP and CP.

Coming into contact with the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), the OTR found itself in fundamental agreement with the iSt's consistent class opposition to the popular front, put forward in positions taken even at the height of Allende's popularity and expressed in the articles collected in *Cuadernos Marxistas* No. 3 ("Chile: Lecciones del Frente Popular"). This initial agreement was extended to include the understanding of the nature of Cuba as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The opportunists of the United Secretariat formed their pseudo-International on the basis of capitulating to Castro's popularity among petty-bourgeois radicals, terming Cuba a healthy workers state that merely "lack[ed] the forms" of proletarian democracy. In contrast, the forerunner of the Spartacist League/U.S., the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP), insisted that Cuba was a deformed workers state, and that workers democracy could only be achieved through political revolution led by a Trotskyist party. It was for defending this Marxist program that the RT was expelled by the SWP, as part of the latter's rapid degeneration through centrism to cringing social-democratic reformism.

Through a discussion of the history of the international Trotskyist movement, the USec capitulation to Castroism was traced to the Pabloist liquidationism which had destroyed the Fourth International in 1951-53.

V

Among the earlier political positions, inherited from Paloism, which the OTR had to reevaluate, the question of guerrillaism was the most difficult. While in the TRO, the tendency which became the OTR had been strongly guerrillaist, accusing the TRO leadership of failure to carry out the decision of the USec's "Ninth World Congress" on "armed struggle" in Latin America. While the OTR had rejected peasant-based "foco" guerrilla war, it stood for guerrilla struggle by the workers.

In discussions with the iSt, the OTR came to the conclusion that Marxists must oppose guerrillaism. As the Revolutionary Tendency stated in 1963, "Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working class bureaucratic regime" ("Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International"). Moreover, whether in rural or urban (Tupamaros) forms, whether as Guevarism, Maoist "people's war" or in a "Trotskyist" disguise (as in the case of the Argentine PRT/ERP), guerrillaism is hostile to proletarian revolution and inevitably leads to—or is the reflection of—Stalinist "two-stage" conceptions if not outright petty-bourgeois nationalism.

The proletariat *cannot* sustain guerrilla war, for the very concept implies the absence of a revolutionary situation and the kind of irregular fighting which requires an ability to retreat rapidly. In addition to its clear class interest, it is the *organization* of the proletariat which gives it political superiority over the atomized peasantry. This organization is the result of the position of the working class in the structure of capitalist society; to retreat into the hills would eventually destroy the class or the class character of its vanguard.

There is no better illustration of the impotence of guerrillaism in the face of a concerted offensive by the bourgeoisie than the recent debacle in Argentina. Even though guerrillaism (both urban and rural) is more widespread, better financed and equipped, of longer duration and of more different varieties than anywhere else in Latin America, none of the guerrilla groups could lift a finger against the Videla coup or even stop the notorious AAA death squads which have assassinated thousands of leftists and workers leaders with impunity over the last three years.

The revolutionary party must, of course, take an active role in organizing the self-defense of the working masses, and the use of guerrilla tactics is often vital as a subordinate civil war tactic. However, the road to power for the proletariat is through mass insurrection against the bourgeois state; the central military organization of the uprising must be an arm of and directed by the mass organization of the working class, led by the Leninist vanguard party.

VI

In Latin America, Castro-inspired guerrillaism has led a generation of subjectively revolutionary militants from

one defeat to another, resulting in the useless slaughter of many of the most dedicated and courageous fighters. In numerous countries, thousands of militants have been grievously misled by the Trotskyist pretensions of the Pabloists and other revisionists into capitulation before non-proletarian leaderships.

We reject the claims of the several international groupings posturing as the Fourth International to be the continuity, either organizationally or politically, of the revolutionary organization founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. The Chilean experience has again demonstrated the bankruptcy of these pseudo-Trotskyist impostors. Those who in 1970-73 were giving a left cover to Allende's Popular Unity, only a year later were creating illusions in the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement and/or its SP and CP collaborators. After playing a central role in creating the MIR, only to be expelled from its creature shortly after, the USec repeated this disastrous course with the debacle of the guerrillaist Argentine PRT/ERP, at the same time sustaining the social-democratic PST, which politically supported the Peronist government. Only an authentically Trotskyist International, firmly based on the theory of permanent revolution and committed to destroying the authority of all the reformist and centrist misleaders of the working class, can resolve the crisis of proletarian leadership.

In view of the large number of subjectively revolutionary militants presently within the ranks of various ostensibly revolutionary organizations and the central importance of politically destroying Pabloism on a world scale, the Revolutionary Trotskyist Organization and the international Spartacist tendency, in this declaration of fraternal relations, agree to undertake joint work toward the rebirth of the Fourth International. We seek to reforge the Fourth International by winning the best cadre and militants through a process of revolutionary regroupment. On the basis of the above points and agreement with the Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League/U.S., subsequently adopted by the iSt, the parties to this declaration aim at achieving the unity of the Revolutionary Trotskyist Organization of Chile with the international Spartacist tendency, and in turn this will be a great step toward the formation of the International Trotskyist League, worldwide in scope.

17 May 1976

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British Troops Out of Northern Ireland

Workers Must Crush Sectarian Terror

by David Strachan

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6 May 1977

We print below the edited text of a talk by Comrade Strachan of the London Spartacist Group, delivered at a Spartacist League forum in New York on March 14.

Our topic tonight is "Leninism, the National Question and Ireland." Why Ireland? It's a fairly small place, only about four million people. The death rate is very low—much, much lower than Lebanon or Cyprus recently. In fact the murder rate in Glasgow presently is much higher than in Northern Ireland, and I imagine it's much higher still in New York. So why Ireland?

Well, first of all, the fact that things are very quiet there at the moment does not indicate relative social peace. There are between 15,000 and 20,000 British troops in Northern

Ireland. It is a very fragile social peace imposed by the brute force of the British army. And if the British army were removed immediately, the prospect would be one of massive bloodshed.

There is a more important reason which we've had to deal with in London, and that is the impact in Britain. The question of Ireland is a crucial test of the revolutionary integrity of the British left-wing groups, and the ability to analyze Ireland is a touchstone for self-proclaimed Marxists everywhere. Currently the question of Ireland provides a crucial test, and I believe a confirmation, of the unique position of the international Spartacist tendency in upholding Leninism on the national question.

For internationalist communists who reject the simple, ultimately genocidal logic of the nationalists, the complex situation in Ireland may seem to be utterly intractable. There have been 800 years of English oppression in Ireland and we have a situation there today which combines



British occupation forces: mission "pacification."

Donald McCullin/Magnum

features which have been classically associated with a variety of types of colonial and imperial oppression. The situation in Northern Ireland resembles in some ways the classic colonial situation, in which a colonial administration administers, oppresses and exploits the native population. But it also resembles the situation where you have a colonial settler people who wipe out or expel the original native population. And, as well, it resembles the features which are classically associated with the multinational empires in eastern Europe.

However, tonight, rather than giving a run-down of the history of Ireland and an up-to-date account of the current events there, I want to concentrate on the programmatic questions.

British Troops Out!

Toward the middle of last year the eminent British historian A.J.P. Taylor was interviewed on the BBC. He had a number of things to say that considerably disturbed bourgeois opinion in Britain. He said quite simply and bluntly that the British should get the hell out of Ireland. He said that the presence of the British army fundamentally oppresses the Catholic Irish people and that nothing progressive can come through the presence of the British army. So I want to start by asserting that an essential plank for any revolutionary analysis and program for Ireland must be the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army.

That should be obvious to revolutionists, but unfortunately it isn't very widely held. In the British Labour Party, with all its "lefts," who are forever willing to sign this and that petition and to take up this and that socialist cause which is as remote as possible from their immediate interests, there is not one MP [Member of Parliament], no matter how left he claims to be, who is clearly for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army. The Communist Party of Great Britain [CPGB] has a position that the British army should withdraw to the barracks. The "Official" wing of the IRA has a position that the British army should withdraw from working-class areas; and a number of other organizations, including the "Provisional" IRA, have a position that the British army should set a date for its withdrawal.

Even among the organizations of the far left, the ostensibly Trotskyist organizations, there is a readiness to abandon this essential plank. For example the International Marxist Group [IMG], the fraternal organization of the American Socialist Workers Party [SWP], which was formerly on the extreme left of the United Secretariat, is currently moving more and more rightward. At the time of the Bloody Sunday commemoration marches last year it had a position not for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal but for "End British Involvement," a nice vague plank. They hoped through this to attract some sympathy from the Communist Party. They didn't, but their willingness to take up some vague slogan like this in order to get a little bit closer to the Communist Party is indicative not only of their opportunism but of their inability to confront and stand up against British imperialism.

It should also be obvious that the "Troops Out" demand by itself will not solve the problem. The historian Taylor recognizes this to his credit. He says that, of course, there

will be some sort of settlement reached after the troops get out; but then he was asked if he thought there would be unity of the people on the island. His answer was that this is a matter of relative strength. He acknowledges that the solution may be imposed by one party or another. He acknowledges that civil wars and bloodshed can solve these questions.

Now almost all the British groups of the far left present the "Troops Out" demand either as having some inherently revolutionary connotations or else as an application of the demand for self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. The assumption that if you just demand "Troops Out" everything will go fine is tied to their understanding of the applicability of the demand for self-determination in Ireland.

I want to take as an example the International Marxist Group again. It says in one of the IMG newspapers, "The right of Ireland to national freedom is merely the basic democratic right of all oppressed peoples to determine their own destiny, free from all outside interference and control. It means the right to control their own economy, decide on their own political system in relation with other countries and the right to develop their own national culture."

That is not the Leninist position on self-determination. Leninists are opposed to all forms of national oppression and to all national privileges. The right of self-determination means simply the right to establish your own political state. It does not say anything about economic independence, or about some conception of utopian freedom from outside interference.

In the general sense the demand for self-determination is unconditional. That is, we do not when we raise it place conditions with regard to the question of the class nature of the state that emerges or of the leadership. However, the demand is not a categorical imperative to be raised everywhere and at all times, even for oppressed nations. It is a subordinate part of the whole revolutionary program. It is one of a range of bourgeois-democratic demands which must be a part, but only a part, of the revolutionary program.

So we can recognize the right of self-determination for a nation and then argue against its exercise. For instance, that is the position of the international Spartacist tendency at this time with regard to Quebec. The demand must be subordinate to the overall considerations of the class struggle.

No to Sectarian Slaughter!

I wanted to make these points to establish that the demand for self-determination is not something that must always be raised. It has to be evaluated in terms of the general considerations of the class struggle. And, in particular, where the exercise of self-determination for one people means that they will, in fact, deny that right to another people, then it ceases to be a democratic demand. This arises with interpenetrated peoples, where two peoples are living intermingled on the same territory.

I want to argue that this is the case in Ireland, that if you simply demand self-determination (a demand which does not transcend the bounds of capitalism), you are condemning the working masses to further rounds of communal bloodshed, massive population transfers and genocide.

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Northern Ireland...

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Those who want to argue that in Ireland the crucial demand is "self-determination for the Irish nation" must face the implications of what they are saying. That is, they are for the forcible reunification of the island under a bourgeois regime, irrespective of the wishes of the Protestants.

Many of the British left-wing groups don't want to face up to this, so they argue that there's some transcendental dynamic that will make everything work out fine. Sixty percent of the population of Northern Ireland—a quarter of the population of the whole island—will just give up or get caught up in this revolutionary dynamic and, as the IMG claims, "The working class will have the opportunity to unite for socialism and peace." Just like that!

It ought to be obvious to everyone but the most myopic and the most nationalist that getting the troops out will not by itself solve things. There are more than 100,000 registered guns in Ulster. The vast majority of them are in the hands of the Protestants who are well-trained, well-organized and quite determined. As the "Unionist" slogan goes, "Ulster will fight. Ulster will be right." And they very well might win, certainly against the IRA and even against the Irish regular army.

The reality of the situation is that a number of possibilities are posed if the British troops get out. There can be the consolidation of a Protestant "Zionist" state, accompanied by forcible population transfers, genocide, etc. There could be a reversal of the terms of oppression. That is, the Irish Catholic state consolidated on the whole island, with the Protestants becoming the new Palestinians. There could be a situation like Cyprus, a new boundary change.

We should also keep in mind what happened in Lebanon, where the most "progressive" Arab state, Syria, the supposed best friends of the Palestinian liberation movement, intervened and blocked with the Christians to smash the Moslem forces. No doubt it will turn around and smash the Christian forces as well. The Irish Catholic state might act in the very same way: intervene in Northern Ireland (with, of course, the support of British imperialism), smash the radical Irish nationalists and then turn on the Protestants. After all, the Irish bourgeoisie has already fought a civil war with the more radical nationalists, so why shouldn't that happen?

Now I don't want to speculate on what is the most likely possibility. All these possibilities pose the likelihood of massive communal bloodshed. So I want to stress that the "Troops Out" demand must be linked to a revolutionary, communist program that can set the basis for working-class unity.

Britain Playing the Orange Card?

In association with the call for "Troops Out" and the false assumption that this will lead to the collapse of Protestant opposition, there is an argument that maintenance of the artificial Orange statelet, the six counties of Ulster, is absolutely essential to the interests of British imperialism in Ireland. So I want to look briefly at the motivations of (and tensions within) British imperialism. It's clear, at this point, that the Northern Ireland statelet is

not necessarily part of the British strategy in Ireland. They have used the Orange card in the past but it's a nuisance today.

British imperialism's approach to Ireland has always been much more complicated than the simplistic analyses that are often put forward. Up to 1912 the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie was aiming for a near-colonial "independent" state. This was stopped and opposed by a block of the Protestants, the officer corps of the British army and the landed aristocracy. Nowadays the border is anachronistic to the general intentions of British imperialism. It gets in the way of business: the desire to invest in the south and the fact that the industry in the north is decaying, run down.

They have a problem. If they try to hand over Northern Ireland to the southern Republic they are going to run into a civil war, because the Irish Catholic bourgeoisie is not strong enough to control the situation. And given the hostility of the Protestants there will be one. So what British imperialism is trying to do is continue business as usual, invest as much as possible and try and keep the lid on things.

They made a big attempt last year at power-sharing, to get the moderate Catholics and the moderate Protestants together, that failed due to opposition from the Protestant hard-liners. So they are now trying a mixture of economic pressure, increasing the power of the police forces and agencies in Northern Ireland (for instance, rearming the Royal Ulster Constabulary) and calculated use of the British army. The result is that Ian Paisley, the most prominent mass leader of the Ulster Unionists, currently accuses the British government of conducting psychological warfare against the Protestants. Just to give you an idea of the discrepancy between the interests of British imperialism and the Ulster Protestants, if you look at the figures of March last year for political prisoners in Northern Ireland, there were 900 Roman Catholics and 600 Protestants. It indicates that there's not exactly agreement between the militant Ulstermen and British imperialism at this time.

What Are the Protestants?

The key question is what are the Protestants. There are a number of ways to avoid this question, and you will find that they have all been tried by various left-wing organizations. One way is to say that the Protestants are just backward workers, and then follow this up with lots of "unite and fight" talk and vague rhetoric about how the dynamic of the class struggle will solve everything. That is, you don't address the communal and national divisions at all. Another way is to adopt the real position of the extreme Irish nationalists and to say, in effect, they are just agents of British imperialism, so drive them into the sea. Or if you're a little bit shamefaced about it you say something along the lines of, "I can't tell the Irish people what to do."

There's a variety of other excuses put forward for plumping for the Catholic nationalists, the Republicans, and I would like to run through them briefly. There's the argument, for example, that only oppressed people have the right to self-determination. Now that is not so at all. For Marxists all nations have the right to self-determination. But the problem with raising the demand for self-determination in Ireland is that it doesn't resolve the Catholic-Protestant conflict in a democratic manner.

Obviously, when India was fighting to separate from Britain, British self-determination wasn't in question. In that situation it would be a reactionary slogan, just as it would be if the Germans and the British each argued that they were fighting WWII on the basis of their right of self-determination.

But in the case of interpenetrated peoples, where one or the other is likely to be immediately either the oppressed nation or else the privileged nation under imperialism, it's a lot more complicated. There are two peoples here and whatever way you work it, if the oppressed gets its self-determination under capitalism, then it will simply become the new oppressor. There's no equitable solution within that framework. And if you want to say that only the oppressed people have the right to self-determination, then you're really saying that what happens to the Protestants after self-determination in Ireland doesn't matter at all, because after all right now the Irish nationalists are progressive and the Protestants are reactionary and that's the end of it. Too bad, Protestants!

There's another argument, to the effect that Loyalism (which is the common term to describe the Protestant communist ideology) is simply an imperialist ideology. That is, it's just really British chauvinism given a little slightly different tinge in order to attract a mass following amongst a certain misled section of the Irish workers.

I don't think any of these arguments I just dealt with deserve serious attention from Marxists. But there are some other arguments which attempt to present a more sophisticated Marxoid type of analysis. The one that's most frequently heard is that the Protestants are a labor aristocracy. This theory is essentially the same one as the New Left guilt theories about the American white working class being bought off because of "white skin privilege."

To begin with it ignores the fact that, with or without the Catholic population, in Northern Ireland you have one of the highest unemployment rates in Britain, and the fact that housing for the whole of the working-class population in Northern Ireland is the worst in Britain and amongst the worst in Europe. It also grievously distorts Marxism. The term "labor aristocracy" was used by Lenin in a very precise way, to indicate a layer of the working class, largely trade-union bureaucrats, that had sold out. To describe the whole of the Protestant working class, including the large percentage unemployed, as a labor aristocracy is obviously not just an extension but a gross distortion of the meaning of that Marxist term.

Thirdly, it suggests that the Protestants are nothing else but a stratum of one class, ignoring the fact that the Protestants are a trans-class grouping. With that methodology you would have to look at the tsarist empire before the Russian Revolution and argue that the Great Russians

and the Poles were labor aristocracies. After all they enjoyed relative privileges if you want to put it that way. They were better off they were more advanced sections of the society. You'd have to say on those grounds that, because the Poles were amongst the most advanced and had privileges compared to so many other peoples in the tsarist Empire, they didn't have a right to self-determination! But of course, the people who have such arguments like to avoid these little problems.

New Left Moralism

In association with these attempts to explain why we don't have to worry about the fate of the Protestants, there are two other things I want to look at. One is the argument that the Ulster state is an artificial imperialist creation, that its borders were designed to ensure a Protestant majority. Now that's true, and prior to the partition, revolutionists in Ireland would have fought for a unified independent Ireland and to transcend the sectional differences that existed at the time.

But with the partition and the communal bloodshed that accompanied it, with the establishment of a bourgeois Irish republic and the state boundaries, to argue for unification after that point is to ignore what had clearly become consolidated communal differences. This argument often goes with the position that not only was it an imperialist partition but, as well, the Protestants are a colonial-settler people. You know, they threw out the native people, they don't really have a right to be there. So, the American people don't have a right to be here now; you've all got to go home. The Australian people don't have a right to be there; they've all got to go home, too.

But if the colonial settlers have no rights, then you've got to argue that the Vietnamese people have no rights. Do you know what the Vietnamese did in the nineteenth century? There're only two villages left now in Vietnam of the Champa kingdom. The Vietnamese were slaughtering them in the nineteenth century; they were throwing out the Cambodians. The Cambodians' national existence was saved by the arrival of French imperialism. So why not give back most of South Vietnam to the Cambodians, too? The point is that almost every modern nation has been consolidated on the basis of slaughtering and wiping out and throwing out other communities and peoples. If you want to argue in these terms, it's simply a form of nationalist, liberal moralism, and leads straight into the typical irreddentist arguments about our "holy" land which we've got to save or get back.

Now while I'm on the subject of the New Left and New Left moralism, there's another argument, which is presented as anti-economism. That is, the Protestants are so bound up in their reactionary ideas that they can never be part of a proletarian revolutionary mobilization. There is a small British group, called the Revolutionary Communist Group [RCG], which puts forward this argument and prides itself on having a Marxist understanding. It recently split, largely because, while it claimed to have a Marxist understanding, it never had any programmatic conclusions. The RCG says:

"It is the height of naïveté to expect the two sections of the northern working class to unite on economic issues, when it is precisely these that divide them. As the crisis begins to bite,

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the Protestant workers will pursue the traditional way out the expulsion of Catholics from employment. Only later, when the Unionist regime is visibly unable to preserve the position of the Protestant workers, will the possibility exist of breaking the Protestant workers from Loyalism and drawing them around the programme which emphasises economic issues."

Now that ought to be absurd for Marxists.

That's full of back-handed support to Irish Catholic nationalism, because what you're saying is that the workers can never transcend their sectional interests; they'll always be narrow and selfish and they'll always want to throw their non-communal class brothers out of employment. So rather than attempting to transcend that type of attitude with a system of transitional demands, you come up with a position which says: narrow trade-union consciousness plus nationalism is revolutionary consciousness. And what that leads to inevitably is a two-stage Stalinist theory of revolution. Because in order for the workers to have revolutionary consciousness, first of all, as a precondition, they must fight for national liberation.

Protestant Communalism and the Union Jack

The Protestants have their origins as a settler colonization. They've generally fought for the British connection with one important historic exception: the 1798 United Irishmen uprising, which was led by Protestant Presbyterians—in particular clergymen and merchants—and was defeated by mobilization of the peasantry by the Catholic priests and the growth of the Orange Order stimulated by the landed aristocracy and British interests. That was effectively *the* opportunity for the establishment of a united nation in Ireland and it failed. Since that time, there have been these deep communal divisions.

I want to make the point that Unionism and Loyalism—i.e., Protestant communalism—should be understood as a means and not an end. That is, the Protestants are acting in what they perceive as their own interests; they're not just agents of British imperialism. This can be graphically shown by looking at quite a number of examples. I only want to give one—Sir Edward Carson who was the first prominent leader of the Protestants in this century. He was actually a representative—to be more precise—of the old landed aristocracy, and he differs significantly from later people like Craig and Paisley in terms of his origins. But he, as a leader of the Protestant interest in Ireland, was willing to threaten British imperialism and to say that he would seek German aid. So he saw the connection in a way that wasn't just acting on British imperialism's behalf.

And you can see a series of other things happening, which I've mentioned already—the 1912 opposition to British plans for Irish home rule, the Ulster Protestant workers' strike in 1974, the number of Protestant political prisoners—which all indicate that Protestant communalism in Northern Ireland is not identical with support for British imperialism.

So the Protestants have a separate identity. It's defined largely negatively, as against the Irish Catholic nation. Religion plays an important part; you've noticed I've been using the term Irish Catholic nation to make the distinction. It's not so much that everyone goes to different

churches, but the religious question provides an ideological form for the dispute between the communities. And it's deeply involved in the cultures and the nationalism of both communities.

Let me make one thing clear: the Protestant bigotry (and its religious qualities) necessarily exceeds the worst excesses of Green nationalism, of Irish Catholic nationalism. Take Rev. Ian Paisley this is from one of his speeches:

"Watch the Jews. Israel is on the way back to favour. Watch the papist Rome rising to a grand crescendo with the Communists. The Reds are on the march; they are heading for an alliance against the return of Lord Jesus Christ."

And these are headings from his paper:

"The Love Affairs of the Vatican."

"Priestly Murders Exposed!"

"Children Tortured, Monks Turned Out as Sadists!"

Now Paisley is not some sort of fringe crackpot religious fanatic. He's a mass leader of the Protestants. He expresses and is a manifestation of the attitudes amongst the Protestants.

The Protestants have a self-image as being hardy and self-reliant while the Catholics they see as being dirty, undisciplined, lazy and breeding like rabbits. The Orange Order, which is a sort of Masonic formation amongst the Protestants, is the epitome of the Ulster Protestant culture. It was created as an instrument of counterrevolution around the time of the United Irishmen's uprising and has been used ever since as such. Its rituals, its exclusion of women, its marches represent a way of life and a social focus for the Protestants.

No to Forced Reunification!

At the same time we look at the Republic and we find a reactionary, clericalist regime. You don't need to go very far to notice that. Take the best of the bourgeois papers in Ireland—and none of them are very good—the *Irish Times*. You find that on every single issue, no matter how insignificant, the thing that is absolutely necessary is the opinion of a priest. The Protestants see themselves as getting nothing from a unified bourgeois Ireland. And they make a great deal about the clerical nature of the state.

There's a whole series of things that are not very attractive about the southern Irish bourgeois state: the prohibition on divorce and contraception, the role of the Catholic church in education, its influence in the higher circles of government. Its influence is not limited solely to the most reactionary circles, but is found in the more plebeian organizations as well. For example, in 1969 during the height of the civil rights movement, when there were some layers of Protestants willing to support it at that time, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association refused to dissociate itself from the Irish Republic's constitution, which contains provisions guaranteeing rights to the Catholic church, and from Irish government policies vis-à-vis the church and contraception.

Leaving aside the empirical facts of the nature of the Irish Republic, apologists for unification argue that presently and in general the Protestants have been treated better in the South than the Irish Catholics in the North. Now in the quantitative sense this is certainly true. Presently, the Irish Catholic state is obviously much more reasonable and liberal than the Protestants in Northern Ireland.

However, there's a more basic point involved here. It's not a matter of looking at the present relative reaction of each nationalism, but seeing that religion is a core component of the nationalism of both groups, and understanding an elementary Marxist principle: that all nationalism is reactionary. To suggest that the Irish Catholic bourgeoisie will treat the Protestants well is to argue that somehow this particular nationalism is progressive, because it's going to be good to people who are not of the Irish Catholic nation. There're no historical examples of nationalist regimes doing that, so why should the Irish be the exception?

The Protestant communalists are not any better, and in the Northern state there is systematic discrimination in housing, hiring and education. That's all well-known. The majority of the sectarian murders that have taken place in Northern Ireland in the recent period have been carried out by Protestant gangs. Let me give you one example of the bigotry in this situation. A gang kicked in the door of a house, lined up a family and shot them—kids and parents alike. Before they shot the woman, one of them raped her. This particular man was subsequently arrested by the British army and received a long jail sentence. When he arrived in jail, he was viciously beaten up by his own comrades and almost killed. The reason he was beaten up was not that he'd shot the Catholics, but because he'd had sexual contact with a Catholic.

So there is obviously a series of urgent democratic demands with regard to the Catholics in the Northern Ireland statelet. In particular I want to mention housing and employment, because just by arguing that it should be more equitably shared, you say to the Protestant workers: you should suffer some more. That's obviously not going to solve the problem, so even in terms of immediate urgent democratic tasks, these will have to be linked to demands that have been classically associated with the Trotskyist Transitional Program. For example, for a sliding scale of hours and work-sharing on full pay.

There's a problem of distinct communities. We recognize that there are distinctions, and we don't want to just ignore them but seek to transcend them, and to offer some way out of the vicious communal cycle. The one million Protestants can be defined largely negatively, as against the Irish Catholic nation, as being not part of the English and Scottish nations any more, and not in a strict sense being a nation either. But they do have a separate identity, and the concerns of this community must be taken into account.

The definite resolution of what the Protestants are exactly is most likely to occur at the time that the British Army gets out, and will depend on the circumstances accompanying that. That is, there could be the consolidation of a real Protestant nation, based on a sectarian, communalist bloodbath in the Irish Catholic community; or they could be wiped out; or else they could, in the context of a revolutionary working-class mobilization, transcend these divisions.

We want to oppose the forcible reunification of the island and reject the call for the "self-determination of the Irish nation," demands which give preference to the claims of one of the interpenetrated peoples. We call instead for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles, which at this point leaves open exactly where the Protestants will fall.

We counterpose the algebraic formulation of an Irish

workers republic to the common left-nationalist slogan (e.g., of the IRA officials) of a "united socialist Ireland." We do not insist that the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland must be part of an all-Ireland workers state. Furthermore, the slogan of a "united socialist Ireland" has become a left cover for Green nationalism implying forced reunification under bourgeois rule and a two-stage revolution—first unity, then socialism.

For Anti-Sectarian Workers Militias!

There's another important plank in our program which I want to emphasize, and that is the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia to combat indiscriminate terror, both Green and Orange. Now this has to be seen in its proper context. There's a group in Britain called the Militant group—a deeply opportunist organization inside the Labour Party—which has a call for a trade-union militia. Unfortunately, our slogan is sometimes confused with this. Their slogan is coupled with the demand for withdrawal of British troops, but they say that until there's a trade-union militia the British Army should stay. And they see this trade-union militia as growing out of some sort of organic unity of the working class based on trade-union economism.

If you take a look at the Armagh shootings last year, where you had five Catholics shot in one night and, I think, two nights later ten Protestant workers shot up in a mini-bus, you can see a problem. Suppose the Protestant workers had been an armed self-defense group. What you would have had was simply a sectarian shoot-out between Catholics and Protestants. So obviously in each defense squad you must have at least one member of both communities.

But the question of an anti-sectarian workers militia is also very much tied in with the rest of your program. It's not just a matter of disliking the killings; what about the British Army, what about indiscriminate terror? It has to be linked to the revolutionary mobilization because otherwise the trade-union militias would simply become the armed adjunct of the peace movement, which doesn't have a position on the key question of whether the British Army should stay. Effectively the Militant group's demand ends up supporting the status quo—that is, the British Army stays, and capitalist law and order is maintained.

There are objections to the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia. One is that it's not practical. I think the comrades are probably all familiar with this type of reasoning—I believe it's one of the props of the Socialist Workers Party's position on troops to Boston, that is, labor/black defense is not practical. Really it is a form of reformist methodology used to justify capitulating.

The other argument is that it is wrong to equate the terror of the oppressed and the oppressor. That's true, but what it leads these people into doing is justifying any act by an oppressed group. That is, as long as you say you are fighting against imperialism, it doesn't matter what you do, we give you a blank check. That means you have to justify Grivas in Cyprus, who was a neo-fascist, not only when he fought British imperialism, but when he went out and slaughtered Turks. And you'd have to defend the Stern gang, not only its actions when it fought British imperialism, but when it slaughtered Palestinians. And, of

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course, in Ireland this means taking the side of the IRA, not only when they are fighting the British Army or the Royal Ulster Constabulary, but also when they blow up Protestant pubs.

The two sides are obviously different in Northern Ireland: the Catholic minority is oppressed and you can't ignore this. It's also true that the question of Irish self-determination was not fully resolved by the establishment of the Irish republic. We defend the IRA against the British Army, but we need to distinguish between terrorism directed against the imperialist oppressor and what is purely indiscriminate, indefensible terrorism. We would not want to defend the perpetrators of such barbarous acts. An anti-sectarian workers militia would be interested in stopping pub bombings which just slaughter workers, the tube—subway—bombings and the Armagh shootings.

It's obvious that the analysis of terrorism is crucial to the ability of that anti-sectarian workers militia to act in a way that is supportable by Marxists. So that any anti-sectarian workers militia is not only going to have to attract at least one member from each community into each such formation, but it must also have a strong component of cadre from the revolutionary party.

Opportunities for Class Unity

I touched several times on the argument that it's not practical to mobilise the Protestants. There's a difference between on the one hand recognising the complexity of the situation and the fact that mass consciousness has been poisoned, and on the other hand a view of profound historical pessimism which says that the working class doesn't have the potentiality as a force for revolutionary change.

If you look at the history of Ireland you can see a number of contradictory phenomena. In 1907 there was a series of strikes led by Jim Larkin which managed to keep significant unity of Protestant and Catholic workers. In 1919 there was a Belfast engineers' (metal workers) strike. The bourgeoisie managed to smash it, and in the sequel 12,000 Roman Catholics lost their jobs. But that wasn't all that happened: 3,000 Protestant socialists and militants lost their jobs, too. In 1933 there was massive unemployment, and for a brief period you had joint mass unemployed marches in which it is reported the Green and Orange flags flew together. This fleeting unity was preceded by massive sectarian violence and followed by massive sectarian upsurge, which destroyed the unity.

Things are not going to get better automatically. We made the point in *Workers Vanguard* that in Cyprus there was one period of 48 hours—at the time of the attempted reactionary coup inspired by the Greek colonels' junta—when the question of nationalism was flatly counterposed to democratic issues, and there was a potentiality of uniting the Turkish and Cypriot workers. It was only one short period where the class struggle asserted itself and subordinated these massive communal tensions, but it was an opportunity.

The same is true in Ireland. In the absence of a revolutionary party we might get some transitory unity on pacifist or reformist grounds. The sequel to the Armagh

shootings is that there were joint marches of Protestant and Catholic workers, but they were marching on a quite unsupportable plank: they were demanding strengthening of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which we want to see smashed!

In the absence of a revolutionary party the prospects are bleak. But an organization which for many years may remain isolated, generally hated and impotent can seize such opportunities in the class struggle as I've outlined. That means defending a Leninist perspective. It means refusal to capitulate to British chauvinism, to Orange loyalism and to Irish nationalism. If we have that, then we can expect that when the opportunities do come, when the class struggle reasserts itself in some form, such upsurges will not be immediately drowned in communal bloodshed. Nor will the workers have a transitory unity on the basis of waving Green and Orange flags together—there will be an opportunity for revolutionary cadre to see that the flags they're waving are red flags. Such opportunities are a part of the mobilisation towards the only progressive solution for the bloody sectarian/communalist conflict in Northern Ireland—proletarian revolution!

Supplemental Remarks by Reuben Samuels

I just gave a forum on colonial-settler states and the permanent revolution, which I would like to relate to the Irish question. An interesting point about the colonial-settler question in South Africa is that the "great treks" of the Boers and, just a little later, by the Zulus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wiped out a great many peoples whose economic livelihood was at a lower level of development than either the Zulus or the Boers, such as the Hottentots and Bushmen who were almost exterminated.

In fact, this has been the entire course of human progress over the last ten thousand years. The history of class society has been one of the subjugation or extermination of less advanced peoples by a more advanced people—those people who had the bigger hatchet, the longer ax, the ones who developed gunpowder and so on. As Engels said, human progress is indeed a cruel chariot that rides over mountains of corpses.

There are a lot of petty-bourgeois vicarious nationalisms, very often at a great distance from the struggle they claim to support, who have picked up the ideology of the "wretched of the earth" from Bakunin to Fanon, and who would like to reverse the chariot of human progress. They dream that the less advanced societies will rise up against the more advanced societies and create another mountain of corpses, but at least the chariot will go downhill this time.

Their politics are basically moralism, so for them what makes the Protestants an oppressor people—or for that matter the Israeli Hebrews, or the South African whites—is their higher standard of living. In the case of the Protestant workers in Northern Ireland, this is not much greater than that of the Irish Catholics, and it's significantly less than the standard of living of anyone in this room.

Let me point out that the average standard of living in Northern Ireland is 25 percent below the standard of living for all of Great Britain, and I assure you that this is a very low standard indeed for northern Europe. Furthermore, if

you compare Protestant to Catholic on the basis of income differentials (which tends to exaggerate the difference), the Protestants have a differential of about 15 percent over the Catholics. Of course, there are percentage-wise more poor Catholics in Northern Ireland, but in absolute numbers there are more poor Protestants than poor Catholics.

There is a book by Geoffrey Bell, published by the International Socialists in Great Britain, which claims that the Protestants are a labor aristocracy. He uses the following reasoning: if you look at the labor aristocracy, it's predominantly Protestant; therefore all Protestant workers constitute a labor aristocracy, or are part of the labor aristocracy. If you look at the labor aristocracy in the United States, by comparison, it's predominantly white; therefore supposedly all white workers are part of a labor aristocracy, as the New Leftist Noel Ignatin told us some years ago. This kind of logic, which I call Geoffrey Bell logic, has superseded both Aristotelian and Hegelian logic. It runs as follows: most or all donkeys are animals, therefore all animals are donkeys.

These are the arguments of people who have despaired of a proletarian solution, that is, a solution other than the mounds upon mounds of corpses that the chariot of history has gone up or come down in the past. This solution, which has only been opened up in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is counterposed to the way in which the national question has been resolved historically, namely through genocide, forced population transfers and subjugation of the oppressed peoples.

And if you don't think the terms of oppression can be reversed, just look at Cyprus. Two thousand years ago Cyprus was colonized by the Greeks; five hundred years ago it was colonized by the Turks, who became an oppressor people under the Ottoman Empire. The British imperialists cultivated both peoples at one time or another. So who were the oppressor people after the British left? The Greeks. And who are the oppressor people in Cyprus

today? The Turks. The terms of oppression can definitely be reversed.

This is not the Leninist solution to the national question. This is the Bakuninist/Fanonist solution: to reverse the terms of oppression, to call for a unified, necessarily Catholic-dominated Ireland without a proletarian revolution.

The 1973 Ulster general strike, a 14-day general strike that totally shut down Northern Ireland, demonstrated that the social power and the social weight of the proletariat is there, even if in this particular case it was used for reactionary ends. It was also an entirely anti-British strike. The British had set up the Council of Ireland, which was a scheme for a peaceful, if forcible (through economic pressure) reunifying of Ireland and dumping Northern Ireland, which has become a liability for British imperialism.

The strike was entirely reactionary, but that was a demonstration of real social power, social power that can be welded to the chariot of human progress, which in this epoch can only be drawn by the proletariat as an international class. And those people who have posed the proletarian solution as opposed to the nationalist solution have gotten a hearing in spite of the communal hatreds. We stand in their tradition, in the tradition of Jim Larkin and the Palestinian Trotskyists.

Supplemental Remarks by James Robertson

Life is complicated, comrades. In the past generation, in the attempt to defend the just struggles of oppressed peoples, there's been a tendency to lose the context in which, for proletarian revolutionary Marxists, that struggle must be undertaken. What we are seeking to do is to defend the core of revolutionary Marxism, the

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Theses on Ireland

The theses on Ireland printed on the facing page were adopted by the International Executive Committee of the iSt on 5 August 1977. They are a product of the political work which the iSt has devoted to dealing with the complexities of the national question in cases involving geographically interpenetrated peoples. As such, the theses codify the significant extensions and refinements which the iSt has made in its programmatic approach to the Irish question over the last several years.

These theses were initiated on the basis of discussions on the Irish question within the London Spartacist Group during the fall of 1976. Reprinted as a supplementary contribution on the Irish question is the presentation, "Workers Must Crush Sectarian Terror!", which first appeared in Workers Vanguard No. 156, 6 May 1977.

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proletarian solution, against those who would simply embrace the "good" nation against the "bad" nation.

I believe that there's very little that can be added to Comrade David's talk in the particular framework of Ireland. I'd like to underline one thing: he spoke of the metal workers' strike in 1919, in which 12,000 Catholics and 3,000 socialist, class-struggle-oriented Protestants were fired, driven out of the industry. Ireland is a very small country, so that is probably *more than half* of the metal workers. Driven out!

What then do you have? We thought we had a bad purge in the late 1940's in the United States where 10,000 communistic elements were driven out. But that's 1/100th of one percent, not over 50 percent. So those who think that the Irish are simply locked into endless sectarian killing should examine the historical record. The metal workers could have been and were trying to be the leadership of the proletariat on the island, but over 50 percent of them were socially annihilated. That's a defeat in a struggle, not the organic chauvinism of the priest-ridden and the arrogant!

That's where the function of the revolutionary party comes in. Every generation there recurs the opportunity and the loopholes where an international Leninist formation that is alert can intervene. You must not take what is at present as the inevitable product of history which cannot be changed, ever. It's necessary to fight, not to be passive.

And in the case of Ireland, it's particularly easy. On the island of Cyprus, a Greek is a Greek and a Turk is a Turk. How many of you have had the same experience that I have had, of working with young militants, either Ulstermen or

from the Republic of Ireland? As soon as they're broken from the nationalist ideologies, and you encounter them and work with them as comrades outside that poor island, they are simply components of the English-speaking nation. That's the truth. It is only when locked into this poverty and oppression that they're thrown at each others' throats. They may *become* separate nations, in the defeat of the proletarian goal. But not yet....

Last point: when I talked here last time, some young woman, who I'm sure was entirely well-meaning, said, "Does any people who oppresses others have a right to exist?" That's the only thing that I took away from the discussion that I'd been brooding about. And then I thought, if one wants to be idiosyncratic and make trouble, what's the most chauvinist people on earth, who absolutely have the right to exist? I think it's probably the Chinese. In 2,000 years they developed no other term for foreigners except, "the barbarians." Do you understand the conception behind that? But they have the right to exist. They were just a very powerful people, used to suppressing those on their borders and never running into anybody from a culturally higher standpoint, even if they were occasionally conquered by "barbarians." It's the nature of the world in the framework of a class-divided society.

I have two observations to end with. For many minorities that are powerful—the young woman put it the wrong way around—it is seen as *necessary to oppress in order to exist*. That's one of the lessons of life that we have to shatter, but it does give some insight into the question. Finally, what should be very obvious, something that precedes Marxism but was encompassed within it: we do not believe that any baby born into an ethnic, religious or national group thereby deserves or merits a death sentence. That's the answer to that young woman. ■

1. The current situation and social configuration in Ireland is the result of centuries of brutal British imperialist domination. It contains features characteristically associated with the former multi-national states of Eastern Europe, as well as with both the colonial settler states which established their own political economy by excluding or destroying native populations, and colonies in which the native population is exploited and oppressed by a relatively thin colonial hierarchy.

In the absence of any significant section of the Irish working class historically freed from national/municipal insecurity, the result is a seemingly intractable situation in which prospects for the development of a genuine class-struggle axis and for an end to the interminable cycle of imperialist exploitation/repression and inter-communal violence appear remote. The strong possibility remains that a just, democratic, socialist solution to the situation in Ireland will only come under the impact of proletarian revolution elsewhere and concretely may be carried on the bayonets of a Red Army against opposition of a significant section of either or both of the island's communities.

Nevertheless, no matter to what extent a bleak immediate prognosis is justified, the conflict in Ireland presents a crucial test of the capacity of a revolutionary internationalist tendency to provide a clear analysis and program and to confront the national question in the imperialist epoch. For revolutionists, who refuse to deal in the simplicities (ultimately genocidal) of the nationalists, the situation in Ireland can appear to be exceedingly complex and intractable. The "Irish question" provides a strong confirmation of the unique revolutionary potency and relevance of the international Spartacist tendency's understanding of Leninism, particularly in relation to geographically interpenetrated peoples.

2. An essential element of our program is the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army. British imperialism has brought centuries of exploitation, oppression and bloodshed to the island. No good can come of the British presence; the existing tie between Northern Ireland and the British state can only be oppressive to the Irish Catholic population, an obstacle to a proletarian class mobilisation and solution. We place no preconditions on this demand for the immediate withdrawal of all British military forces or lessen its categorical quality by suggesting "steps" toward its fulfillment (such as simply demanding that the army should withdraw to its barracks or from working-class districts).

At the same time we do not regard the demand as synonymous with or as a concrete application of either the call for Irish self-determination (that is, a unitary state of the whole island) or for an independent Ulster—two solutions which within the framework of capitalism would be anti-democratic, in the first case toward the Protestants and in the second toward the Irish Catholics. Nor is the demand for the withdrawal of British troops sufficient in itself, as though it has some automatic, inherent revolutionary content or outcome. As the eminent British bourgeois historian A.J.P. Taylor observed in an interview:

"I don't know what the term bloodbath means. If it means people will be killed, they are being killed all the time. The alternative is not between an entirely peaceful Northern Ireland in which nobody's being killed and a Northern Ireland in which a lot of people will be killed. If the British

withdraw some sort of settlement would be arrived at. You can't tell what it is because the forces in play can't be judged until they can operate....

"...the presence of the British Army in Ireland prolongs the period of conflict and uncertainty....

"This [possibility of a united Ireland] is a matter of relative strength. Owing to the history of the last thirty years or perhaps longer, owing to history since 1885, when Randolph Churchill—Winston's father—first raised the cry of 'Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right'—in the past ninety years the Protestants of Northern Ireland have been taught to think of themselves as a separate body, almost separate nationality within Ireland, and have established now a long-term domination of Northern Ireland, partly because of their superior economic strength, partly because of the backing they have received from the British Government, and partly because they are, or up to now have been, the more determined. For them, Protestant domination is the answer to the situation in Northern Ireland."

—*Troops Out*, No. 2

As historically demonstrated by examples such as India, Libya, Cyprus and Palestine, the withdrawal of British imperialism, while a necessary objective of the communist vanguard, in itself does not automatically ensure an advance in a revolutionary direction. Thus, the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland must be linked to and constitute a part of a whole revolutionary program.

3. As Leninists we are opposed to all forms of national oppression and privilege and stand for the equality of nations. Writing in 1913 Lenin succinctly set forth as follows the fundamental principles underlying the revolutionary social-democratic position on the national question:

"As democrats, we are irreconcilably hostile to any, however slight, oppression of any nationality and to any privileges for any nationality. As democrats, we demand the right of nations to self-determination in the political sense of that term...i.e., the right to secede. We demand unconditional protection of the rights of every national minority. We demand broad self-government and autonomy for regions, which must be demarcated, among other terms of reference, in respect of nationality too."

—*Draft Programme of the 4th Congress of Social Democrats of the Latvian Area*, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19

Thus, the right to self-determination means simply the right to establish a separate state, the right to secede. We reject the notion that it means "freedom from all outside interference and control" or entails economic independence. In the general sense the right to self-determination is unconditional, independent of the state that emerges or its leadership.

However, for Leninists this right is not an absolute demand, a categorical imperative, to be implemented at all times and everywhere there is a nation. It is only one of a range of bourgeois-democratic demands; it is a part, subordinate to the whole, of the overall programmatic system. When the particular demand for national self-determination contradicts more crucial demands or the general needs of the class struggle, we oppose its exercise.

As Lenin notes:

"The several demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not an absolute, but only a *small part* of the general-democratic (now: general-socialist) world movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected." [emphasis in original]

—*The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up*, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22

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In particular, in the case of interpenetrated peoples sharing a common territory, we oppose the exercise of self-determination by one nation where this flatly conflicts with the same right for another nation. In this situation the same general considerations apply, namely our opposition to all forms of national oppression and privilege, but in such circumstances the exercise of self-determination by one or the other people in the form of the establishment of their own bourgeois state can only be brought about by the denial of that right to the other. Under capitalism this would simply be a formula for reversing the terms of oppression, for forcible population transfers and expulsions and ultimately genocide. It is a "solution" repeatedly demonstrated in history, for example in the cases of India/Pakistan, Israel/Palestine and Cyprus.

In general, our support for the right to self-determination is negative: intransigent opposition to every manifestation of national oppression as a means toward the unity of the working class, not as the fulfillment of the "manifest destiny" or "heritage" of a nation, nor as support for "progressive" nations or nationalism. We support the right of self-determination and national liberation struggles in order to remove the national question from the historic agenda, not to create another such question. Within the framework of capitalism there can be no purely democratic solution (for example through universal

suffrage) to the national question in cases of interpenetrated peoples.

The same general considerations apply not only to "fully formed" nations, but also to nationalities and peoples which may still be something less than fully consolidated nations, for example the Eritreans in their struggle against Amharic domination or the Biafrans at the time of the Nigerian civil war. Indeed, not infrequently the historical formation of nations is tested and completed in the process of struggles for self-determination. Our opposition to the exercise of self-determination by an interpenetrated people would also apply where one or more of the groupings, though not a historically compacted nation, has sufficient relative size and cultural level that the exercise of self-determination could only mean a new form or reversal of the terms of oppression.

4. Concretely, in Ireland the question of Irish national self-determination was not fully resolved by the establishment of the Republic of Eire. But to demand "Irish self-determination" today represents a denial of the Leninist position on the national question. It is incumbent on revolutionists to face up to exactly what the call for "self-determination of the Irish people as a whole" means.

Obviously the call is not one for the simultaneous self-determination of both communities, an impossibility for interpenetrated peoples under capitalism. In another sense the demand is about as meaningful as calling for "self-determination for the Lebanese people as a whole" in the middle of last year's communal bloodletting. In the case of



British troops round up "suspected IRA members" in Northern Ireland.

Gamra

Ireland such a demand utterly fails to come to terms with the question of the Protestant community of Ulster, comprising 60 percent of the statelet's and 25 percent of the whole island's population. Such a demand is a call for the formation of a unitary state of the whole island, including the *forcible unification of the whole island by the Irish bourgeois state irrespective of the wishes of the Protestant community*. It is a call for the Irish Catholics to self-determine at the expense of the Protestants. It is a call for the simple reversal of the terms of oppression, an implicit call for inter-communal slaughter, forced population transfers and ultimately genocide as the way forward to the Irish revolution.

5. The present six-county enclave in Northern Ireland is a "sectarian, Orange statelet," the product of an imperialist partition. Prior to the partition revolutionaries would have opposed partition, striving to cement revolutionary unity in the struggle for independence from British imperialism. However, with the partition, the accompanying communal violence and demographic shifts, and the establishment of a *bourgeois* republic in the south it was necessary to oppose the forcible reunification of the six counties with the rest of Ireland. At the same time the present statelet guarantees the political and economic privileges of the Protestants. We oppose the Orange state and the demand for an independent Ulster as forms of determination for the Protestants which necessarily maintain the oppression of the Irish Catholic population of Ulster, an extension of the Irish Catholic nation. Since they are the local bodies of the British repressive state apparatus and the training ground for the present Protestant paramilitary groups and a future reactionary Protestant army, we demand: Smash the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR).

6. There is a series of urgent democratic demands that apply to the situation of the oppressed Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland. We demand full democratic rights for the Catholic minority and an end to discrimination in housing and hiring. But such demands must be linked to class demands which transcend the bounds of bourgeois democracy. Without the demand for a sliding scale of wages and hours, for example, the call to end discrimination will simply imply leveling in an already economically depressed situation. The relevant partial, negative, democratic and economic demands must be integrated into the revolutionary transitional program which transcends the capitalist framework of economism and democratic reformism.

7. Historically the Protestants of Ulster were an extension of the Scottish and English nations. The 1798 United Irishman uprising was led by the Protestant middle class and reflected the impact of the French and American bourgeois revolutions on the nascent capitalist class (overwhelmingly Protestant) in Ireland. This insurrection against British imperialism, which was defeated in part by the development of the reactionary sectarian Orange Order and the mobilisation of the peasantry by Catholic priests, was the opportunity for the establishment of a modern nation of the whole island. Since that time, though the most modern capitalist sectors remained Protestant for a long period, the Protestants have acted for the most part as loyal and fervent defenders of the union with British imperialism. The bigotry and discrimination among the Protestants

toward the Irish Catholic nation necessarily exceeds the worst excesses of Irish Green nationalism, and most of the sectarian murders in the current period have been carried out by Protestant paramilitary groups.

Though not yet a nation, the Protestants are certainly not a part of the Irish nation and are distinct from the Scottish and English nations. Presently their separate existence is defined in large part as against the Irish Catholic nation and at the ideological level is expressed in religious terms. With their own social and cultural fabric (epitomised in the Orange Order) and history of opposition to the Irish nationalist cause, they have therefore acted as the "loyalist" allies of British imperialism. At the same time, in this century the allegiance has been more a means than an end, demonstrated, for example, by the willingness of Sir Edmund Carson to seek German aid if British imperialism would not fulfill the Ulster Protestants' demands and by the 1974 Ulster Workers Strike.

In all likelihood, a definite resolution of the exact character of the Ulster Protestant community will be reached with the withdrawal of the British army and will depend on the circumstances surrounding this. The particular conditions will pose point-blank their future and the "solution" to the Irish question. The solution posed by A.J.P. Taylor is but one possibility:

"The question is whether the Irish nationalist majority is strong enough to expel the Protestants. If they are, that is the best way out."

—quoted in the *Guardian* [London], 13 April 1976

At the same time the social organisation, weaponry, military expertise and alliances of the Protestants, make a "Zionist" solution entirely conceivable. On the other hand, if the withdrawal of the British army was in the context of massive class mobilisations, opportunities would undoubtedly arise for a class determination of the question.

8. Attempts to ignore or deny the separate identity and interests of the Ulster Protestants through the familiar liberal plea that British or other socialists cannot "tell the Irish how to wage their struggle" or the argument that only oppressed nations have a right to self-determination can be rejected easily on general theoretical grounds. The Protestants are neither a colonial administration (as were the British in India) nor a closed colour caste (as are the whites in South Africa). Arguments that the Protestants have no legitimate claim because they were originally settlers and the present statelet is an artificial imperialist creation are based ultimately on notions of nationalist irredentism and "historical justice." Although sometimes expressed as the demand that the Protestants go "home," such arguments are in the last analysis genocidal. Also inadequate is the explanation of the Protestants as simply a backward sector of the Irish nation, whose loyalism/Orangeism is purely an imperialist ideology given a certain nationalist tinge in order to attract a mass base.

9. Protestant communalism does have a material basis in the marginal privileges enjoyed by the Protestant workers. The most explicit attempt to confront and discount the Protestant community's separate identity in "Marxist" terms is the description of the Protestant working class as a "labor aristocracy." This explanation is similar to the New Left theories about the American white working class and involves an attempt to broaden the term so as to destroy its original meaning, while failing to

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recognise that the Protestant community extends through all classes and strata of society. Even to claim that the entire Protestant working class of Northern Ireland is a labour aristocracy is a gross distortion of the term. The Northern Ireland working class as a whole has some of the worst wages, unemployment and housing in the British Isles. Moreover, wage differentials between Protestant and Catholic workers are not so marked that the two communities have significantly different living standards.

10. From the point of view of the general interests of British imperialism the border between Ulster and the Republic is now anachronistic:

"United Kingdom soldiers and officials and money are heavily deployed in Northern Ireland because Westminster has clear obligations there. English Governments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries planted the garrison-colonists whose descendants' presence has been the principal source of Ireland's twentieth century distress; and London is the seat of such authority as the Province knows. To withdraw that authority now would intensify the problem of public order without in the least advancing a settlement of the central political question. The search for an acceptable local administration would simply continue in worsened circumstances. Britain's strategic interest in Northern Ireland is dead, and its economic interest is all on the side of withdrawal; but moral as well as practical considerations demand that British resources should remain engaged until both the political and the public order problems are at least within sight of resolution."

Observer [London], 1 February 1976

While historically British imperialism has used the sectarian divisions, played the "Ulster card" to its own advantage, it is not now committed to the preservation of the Orange statelet and would prefer a settlement which would remove its direct political responsibility on the island. With the decline of Ulster industry and the growth of investment opportunities in the south, the border is an obstacle to its overall intentions. But at the same time as it adopts various schemes to this end British imperialism is constrained to maintain capitalist law and order and prevent a complete breakdown in the social order. The increase in independence talk by Ulster Protestants, the Ulster Workers Strike of 1974 and the significant number of Protestants imprisoned for political offences do not reflect mere "tactical" differences between the imperialists and their subordinates, but rather a divergence of interests between genuinely distinct forces.

11. We reject the argument that Protestant workers are so reactionary that only force will convince them and that the precondition for winning them is the destruction of the Orange statelet. The understanding that the current partition is inherently oppressive is perverted into a conception of a "two-stage" revolution in which the socialist tasks can only follow the completion of Irish national unity on the whole island. Sometimes linked to this is the claim that it is "naïve" to expect the Protestant and Catholic workers to unite on "economic" issues, since it is these that divide them. By analogy, no working class could ever transcend its sectional interests. Economism is the political expression of the failure of the working class in the absence of a revolutionary leadership to reject bourgeois ideology and place its revolutionary class interests above particular, sectional or apparent needs or

desires. The above argument is based on the central premise of economism—that the working class cannot transcend its immediate sectional interests and identify with all oppressed and the future of humanity. Such "anti-economism" is in fact a denial of the pertinence of the Transitional Programme in the service of the nationalism of the oppressed.

12. The Protestants feel legitimately threatened by the proposal for a united (bourgeois) Ireland, that is, their forcible absorption into an enlarged version of the reactionary clericalist state of Eire. The communalism/nationalism of the Protestants has a defensive character and is not the chauvinism of a great power. A united bourgeois Ireland would not provide a democratic solution for their claims and we must therefore reject such a solution. Such a state would necessarily be sectarian, and the Protestants will not voluntarily enter such a union.

The difficulties of such a solution are indicated in the earlier experience of the Bolsheviks. At the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920 the Ukrainian delegate Merejin observed in an amendment to the "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions":

"The attempt made to settle the relationship between the nations of the majority and the minority nationalities in territories of mixed population (Ukraine, Poland, White Russia), has shown that the transfer of the power of government from the hands of the big capitalists to the groups of petty bourgeoisie constituting the democratic republics not only does not diminish but, on the contrary, aggravates the friction among the nationalities. The democratic republics oppose themselves to the proletariat and attempt to convert the class war into a national one. They become rapidly impregnated with nationalistic exclusiveness, and easily adapt themselves to the practices of the previous dominating nations, which fermented discord among the nationalities, and organised pogroms, with the assistance of the government apparatus, to combat the dictatorship of the proletariat...."

The present Irish bourgeois republic is a clerical reactionary state in which the Roman Catholic Church enjoys considerable real and latent powers. An essential aspect of this is not the current level of religious persecution or discrimination (though the current repressive measures directed mostly against the IRA are an indication of the Irish bourgeoisie's intentions), but the relationship of Roman Catholicism to Irish nationalism, especially as it helps to define the divisions between the two communities.

Leninism and nationalism are fundamentally counterposed political viewpoints. Thus, while revolutionists struggle against all forms of national oppression, they are also opposed to all forms of nationalist ideology. It is a revision of Leninism to claim that the "nationalism of the oppressed" is progressive and can be supported by communist internationalists. In one of his major works on the national question Lenin stressed:

"Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just,' 'purest,' most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism...."

*"Critical Remarks on the National Question,"
Collected Works, Vol. 20*

To attempt to dismiss the above-mentioned features of Irish nationalism and the Irish Republic, to suggest that somehow these matters are not important, is to imply that Irish nationalism and capitalism are in some way "progressive" and (unlike all other nationalists and capitalists) will not promote racial, sexual and communal

divisions in the working class, in particular will not discriminate and persecute non-members of their national grouping.

13. Ireland, like other situations of interpenetrated peoples as in the Middle East and Cyprus, is a striking confirmation of the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution. The inevitable conclusion is that while revolutionists must oppose all aspects of national oppression, they must also recognise that the conflicting claims of interpenetrated peoples can only be equitably resolved in the framework of a workers state. We struggle for an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles. While the establishment of a united workers state of the whole island may be preferable, the above demand is algebraic, leaving open the question of where the Protestants fall. This recognises that the nature of the Protestant community has not yet been determined in history. As such, it is counterposed to calls for a "united workers republic" or for a "united socialist Ireland" (where this demand is not simply an expression for left/nationalist or Stalinist two-stage theories). Placing the demand in the context of a socialist federation has the additional advantage of highlighting the essential relationship of the proletarian revolution in the whole area and the virtual impossibility of the resolution of the Irish question on a

working-class basis outside this framework. This, and the strong representation of Irish workers in the working class in Britain, points to the demand for a British Isles-wide trade-union federation as a method of promoting joint struggle and cutting across the divisions in the working class in Ireland.

14. Particular emphasis must be placed on the demand for programmatically based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage. The British bourgeois press and the local imperialists' bloodstained henchmen in the British Labour Party responded hysterically to a composite motion at the 1976 BLP Conference demanding the withdrawal of British troops and the formation of a trade-union based militia, despite the fact that the motion was the inadvertent result of right-wing culling of motions expressing ersatz Irish nationalist positions and a mealy-mouthed resolution from the *Militant* grouping. Our demand is not the same as that of the deeply opportunist and BLP-entrist *Militant* group, which links its call for trade-union militias to the call for troop withdrawal in a way that makes the existence of trade-union militias a precondition for troop withdrawal and which sees the militias as growing organically out of economist struggles. In Ulster the problem is not that the workers are not armed. Such militias will need a broad and strong programmatic basis if they are not to be derailed or coopted. They cannot develop just out of trade unionism but fundamentally require the existence of a strong and authoritative revolutionary cadre. Each militia unit would need at least one member of each community and the presence and strong influence of trained revolutionary cadre. Consequently, the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia is closely linked to the growth of a Leninist party based on a developed revolutionary program. Without being based on the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British army and without our analysis of terrorism, for example, such workers militias would simply be the armed adjunct of the women's peace movement.

15. In military conflicts between Irish nationalist organisations and the British army/state authorities we defend the actions of the former since this is still a struggle of an oppressed nationality against imperialism, even though their struggle may be associated with a program which, if accomplished, would violate the democratic rights of the Protestants. This stance implies nothing about the program of these groups, which can range from those similar to the Zionist Stern Gang and Grivas' EOKA to more radical "socialist" nationalists.

Outside this military struggle with British imperialism and its direct agents, in the conflict between the Irish Catholic and Protestant communities and their respective organisations, the national/municipal aspect transcends any formal left/right differences. Such violence is frequently directed against symbols of non-sectarianism (for example, pubs where both Catholic and Protestant workers socialise) and is an obstacle to any form of integrated class struggle. Terrorist acts directed against the Protestant community by organisations of the oppressed Irish Catholic community are in no way a blow against imperialism, not justifiable as the "violence of the oppressed" and are no more "progressive" or defensible than similar acts by Protestant paramilitary groups. Thus,

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G. Peress/Magnum

IRA checkpoint in the Bogside in Londonderry, 1972.

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while attacks on British army posts or the bombing of Aldershot military barracks are politically defensible acts, the pub bombings (both in Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods), the London underground bombings, the South Armagh shootings and other such acts of indiscriminate terrorism are completely indefensible, in no way representing a blow against imperialism. Such acts, based as they are on nationalist and genocidal premises, can only deepen communal divisions and erect barriers to working-class unity.

In such circumstances we recognise the right of both communities to self-defence. Simply because an organisation claims to be fighting on behalf of the oppressed and against imperialism does not make all its acts defensible. If this were so, then revolutionists would be compelled to defend the actions of both the EOKA in Cyprus and the Zionist Stern Gang in Palestine (organisations to whom the Provisional IRA are akin), not only when they attacked British imperialism but respectively in their attacks on the Turkish community and the Palestinians (at Deir Yassin, for example). Only with this understanding of terrorism can the workers militias in Northern Ireland be armed against capitulating to a blanket approval of the terrorism of the oppressed or becoming a mask for the machinations of imperialism.

16. In the history of the Irish labour movement there have been examples of significant workers' solidarity which have temporarily cut across the sectarian divisions. Invariably, as in the case of the 1919 Belfast engineers' strike and the mass unemployment marches in the 1930's,

they have been countered with massive sectarian mobilisations intended to wipe out the fragile proletarian unity. In the absence of a revolutionary party, there can arise examples of transitory unity, albeit on pacifist or reformist grounds. A sequel to the South Armagh shootings was joint marches of Protestant and Catholic workers; but they marched to demand the strengthening of the RUC, which must be smashed.

Even such examples indicate the potentiality for workers unity. The instances of class solidarity are not proof of a deep-seated strain of class unity or that the situation is not poisoned by sectarian hatreds, but indicate that the opportunity can arise for a revolutionary organisation, though perhaps hitherto isolated, weak and small, to intervene, altering the course of the conflict toward a class determination and proletarian revolution.

For the Immediate and Unconditional Withdrawal of the British Army!

Smash the RUC and the UDR!

Down with the Prevention of Terrorism Act and All Other Special Powers Acts in Britain and Ireland!

Full Democratic Rights for the Catholic Minority in Northern Ireland!

No Discrimination in Hiring and Housing! For a Sliding Scale of Wages and Hours!

For a Programmatically Based Anti-Sectarian Workers Militia To Combat Orange and Green Terror and Imperialist Rampage!

For a British Isles-Wide Trade-Union Federation!

Forward to the Irish Section of the Reborn Fourth International!

No Forcible Reunification! For An Irish Workers Republic Within A Socialist Federation of the British Isles!



G. Peress/Magnum

On Bourgeois Class Consciousness

by Joseph Seymour

The relationship between the institutional structure of capitalism and the conscious policies of the bourgeoisie remains something of a gray area in Marxist theory. At one pole is the purely structural approach of social-democratic revisionism, in which the institutions of capitalism are not associated with nor considered to be defended by definite groups of people. This outlook is central to the social-democratic theory of the state. At the other pole is the conspiracy theory of history, in which a totally self-conscious ruling class manipulates society to remain in power.

Historically, the conspiracy approach has been generally associated with "leftism." However, this is not logically necessary. A purely manipulationist view of capitalism can lead to a completely elastic conception of reformist possibilities, particularly the degree to which unlimited economic concessions can be granted, thus ignoring the law of value. Thus either approach can be compatible with reformist conclusions—either the view that there are only the automatic workings of the system without a definite class enemy, or the view that the bourgeoisie is so conscious that it can forestall any development of a revolutionary situation, making reformism the only feasible approach.

A purely structural approach is compatible with those forms of "leftism" which consist solely in propagandizing that socialism is a superior form of social organization (e.g. DeLeonism). It is, however, incompatible with Leninism. The Leninist theory of the state holds that the ruling class is a definite group of people who have to be replaced in the administration of society by another definite group of people, the core of which is the proletarian vanguard party. Thus the Leninist party is not only an instrument for organizing the revolutionary class for the seizure of

"Each new class which puts itself in the place of the one ruling before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all members of society It will give its ideas the form of universality, and present them as the only rational, universally valid ones."

—Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*

power, but is also the nucleus of the administration of a workers state.

"The Best of All Possible Worlds"

Bourgeois class "consciousness" is not Marxist class analysis in reverse. It is necessarily a false consciousness imposed on the bourgeoisie by its need to "represent its interest as the common interest of all members of society" and to "give its ideas the form of universality." Therefore, bourgeois ideology always presents the existing society as the "best of all possible worlds." This is not to say that bourgeois ideology always presents society in an optimistic light. But where a pessimistic outlook is presented, human suffering is attributed to human nature (e.g. Hobbes), scarce natural resources (e.g. Malthus) or god.

Insofar as it does not borrow from Marxism, bourgeois ideology is simply a hypostatization of bourgeois society. The central principle of bourgeois social theory, from Comte through Weber to Talcott Parsons, is the universality and necessity of social stratification. The idea of an egalitarian society based on the enormous raising of the technical and cultural level of mankind is completely foreign to bourgeois sociology. Bourgeois economics, by definition, deals with a society characterized by scarcity in the face of unequal distribution of skills and resources.

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Even where bourgeois ideology appropriates some Marxist concepts, it retains its "best of all possible worlds" aspect. This is most clearly expressed in social-democratic revisionism, represented by George Lichtheim. Post World War II revisionism of the Kautskyan school maintains that capitalism has changed to meet the programmatic goals which nineteenth century Marxism associated only with a socialist regime. Thus, it is claimed that universal suffrage in a parliamentary system has effectively transferred political power to the working class, or that technocratic capitalist planning means production for use and not for profit.

Reactionary Marxists?

The question of bourgeois class consciousness bears a certain relation to the old Austro-Marxist concept of a Marxist who is not a socialist—one who recognizes the historical inevitability of socialism but does not support it, or possibly even opposes it. However, the Marxist analysis of class society leads directly to an understanding of socialism as a just, super-abundant society capable of producing happier human beings. To recognize this and still oppose socialism is to be completely cynical. As Lukacs correctly pointed out, the Austro-Marxist dichotomy between grasping a Marxist class analysis and opting for a socialist society was a pseudo-problem created by divorcing thought from its necessary social consequences—an exercise in rational idealism. It is doubtful if even a single bourgeois politician could be totally cynical yet still effective. It is clearly impossible for the entire ruling class to be cynical—i.e., to despair of the social desirability or even the historical possibility of its remaining in power.

It is significant that bourgeois politics approaches open cynicism only in extreme degeneration—fascism. And even here pure ruling-class power is disguised with nationalist ideology of the most reactionary sort. It is also significant that fascism produced (as much by its ideology as by its actions) a profound moral revulsion on the part of the European working class which was an important element in the revolutionary situation which developed in the wake of World War II. The deep popularity and revolutionary aspect of anti-fascist sentiment threw the European bourgeoisie back to liberal reformist ideology and parliamentary politics.

The falsity of the notion that the ruling class are Marxists who are on the other side of the barricades is demonstrated by ideologues trained in the manipulation of Marxist concepts who go over to the camp of reaction, such as Robert Michels and James Burnham. In their careers as reactionaries, they experience continual frustration at their inability to win the bourgeoisie over to a "counter-Marxist" worldview. Thus most of James Burnham's writings are aimed at demonstrating how traditional bour-

geois ideology is an obstacle to understanding the strength and danger of communism and how conflicts within the bourgeoisie are an obstacle to combatting communism. Burnham wrote an entire book designed to prove that the dominant political attitudes of the American ruling class were optimistically false. Burnham felt continually frustrated by national capitalist rivalry, attacking Gaullism as a petty-bourgeois deviation. European conservatives found Burnham's hostility to DeGaulle, a successful right-wing authoritarian, inexplicable or an expression of American chauvinism. Only an ideologue familiar with Marxism could place class unity (bourgeois class unity) higher than national interest. Burnham's attitude is totally unacceptable to the bourgeois worldview, even when it is self-consciously presented in the interest of the bourgeoisie.

Historical vs. Immediate Interest

A common error in analyzing bourgeois class consciousness is a tendency to anthropomorphize class so that the bourgeoisie is seen to act rationally in its long-term interests. To the bourgeois class are attributed all kinds of individual characteristics—volition, foresight, memory, etc. Associated with this is a tendency to overstate the degree to which the state shapes the economy, undervaluing the operations of the market. It is important to realize the essentially atomized nature of the bourgeoisie. The basic motive force of bourgeois behavior is maximization of individual firm profits. The degree to which actual capitalists are willing to, or able to, sacrifice profit maximization to some conception of the historic interest of their class is quite limited. History is replete with examples of individual capitalist appetites undermining the general policy of the ruling class. The classic example is the sale of U.S. scrap metal to Japan during the diplomatic escalation preceding World War II. The sugar beet lobby proved a minor, but real, obstacle to the Eisenhower administration's cutting the Cuban sugar quota in 1959, fearing that a reorganization of the U.S. sugar import system would weaken its own monopolistic position. Even where the majority of capitalists are prepared to work for a certain policy, the mechanisms for doing so are faulty. The institution of private property imposes strict limits on the state, which is the main instrument of collective ruling-class action. This is demonstrated by the relative inefficiency of capitalist war planning even where the overwhelming majority of capitalists are genuinely trying to cooperate.

Is the Bourgeoisie an International Class?

A fundamental question about bourgeois class consciousness is whether the bourgeoisie is capable of transcending national identity and interests for

some conception of international class solidarity. On this question turn both the tendency toward inter-imperialist war and the likelihood and efficacy of international interventions against proletarian revolutions and resulting workers states.

Part of the disorientation of *American* ideologues, radical or otherwise, stemmed from the global appetites of U.S. imperialism in the 1943-71 period (Henry Luce's "American Century" and the U.S. "obligation" to "defend the Free World"). This was taken by some to reflect the American bourgeoisie's transcendence of mere national aspirations. In fact, what it constituted was a national ruling class possessing for a historical moment so much productive power that it aspired to subordinate the entire planet to U.S. domination—a very ordinary appetite writ large.

The issue was first posed sharply in the Marxist movement by Kautsky's theory of ultra-imperialism, which held that competition between imperialist nations could be peacefully mediated in the same manner as competition between domestic monopolies. Lenin countered that the bourgeoisie cannot transcend national interests and that inter-imperialist agreements can only be based on the existing balance of strength which all parties are desperately seeking to change to their advantage.

That the tendency toward inter-imperialist war exists despite its known de-stabilizing effects on the bourgeois order is indicated by the last reported meeting between the French ambassador Coulandre and Hitler before the outbreak of World War II. Both agreed that a prolonged war might well produce proletarian revolutions ("only Trotsky will be the victor," Coulandre is reported to have said). And yet neither the French nor the German ruling class was prepared to sacrifice its aim of national expansion to prevent the revolutionary destruction of the bourgeoisie which both considered a real eventuality.

The national character of the bourgeoisie is demonstrated by the response to the Bolshevik Revolution and Soviet state. While all the imperialist powers intervened against the Bolsheviks, they were incapable of cooperating, since the way in which Bolshevik Russia was defeated would shape the balance of world power. In 1923 the Soviet government effected an agreement with the most reactionary wing of the German ruling class to train the Red Army. During the 1930's, despite talk of an anti-Soviet crusade, when the crunch came all the capitalist powers determined their relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of immediate national interest. Germany effected an alliance with the Soviet Union, then broke it when German leaders believed they had

a decisive military advantage. The Western powers entered into an alliance with the Soviet Union when they needed its military support. Japan remained neutral despite its alliance with Germany. This does not mean that unified international reaction against a proletarian revolution is impossible, but the obstacles to it are great, as each imperialist power sees its own aggrandizement as the overriding goal.

While capable of certain acts and attitudes of internationalist solidarity, the bourgeoisie is a nationally limited class. It is capable neither of abolishing national states nor, often, even of subordinating immediate national interests to the historic defense of the bourgeois order.

The class unity of the bourgeoisie is undermined by its atomization into competing firms within each state and by the inevitable conflicts between the national bourgeoisies. The bourgeoisie is moreover partly the creature of its own false consciousness, bourgeois ideology. With its options limited by the operation of the capitalist market and the declining rate of profit, the bourgeoisie maneuvers within circumscribed confines.

The bourgeoisie is not devoid of elemental class instinct and short-term memory, enabling it to maneuver in reaction to an immediate threat. When the working class is disorganized and misled by reformist, class-collaborationist leaderships, the capitalist class can consolidate its position and stave off its downfall even under the most threatening objective conditions. In the 1930's the bourgeoisie seized upon its last resort, fascism, a Bonapartist form of rule which allows the capitalist state a relatively greater degree of autonomy from the particular appetites of sections of the class it represents. Following the 1968 general strike in France, the French bourgeoisie used reformism rather than repression, granting economic concessions significant enough to undermine France's competitive position in the world market for a short period.

Thus the capitalist class is capable of maneuvering to retain power granted one essential factor: the absence of a revolutionary proletarian leadership which seizes the initiative of the objective situation. The lesson to be drawn from the failure of the working class thus far to extend the one victorious socialist revolution in Russia to the world-wide triumph of proletarian power is not to credit the bourgeoisie with omniscience or infinite maneuverability. The conclusion must be Trotsky's conclusion of the crisis of proletarian leadership, which demands the organization of the international Leninist party to lead the working class in the conquest of power. ■

OCI Slanders the Dubious Varga...

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ostensibly Trotskyist organizations in France and elsewhere to mask its right turn.

But the OCI did not reckon with the iSt. After seven months of repeated requests, the OCI released a part (20 percent, by its own account) of the "Varga archives" in August 1974. Seven months to xerox 200 pages!

Meanwhile, Varga was pursuing his mendicant methods. In the late 1950's he had sought funds from the U.S. State Department. Now his organization was running after the iSt, not in order to engage in political discussion but simply cynically in the naive hope of getting financing for its own "international conference." [See "La LIRQI éconduite en fureur," *Spartacist* (édition française) No. 8, February 1975.]

In February 1975 the Spartacist tendency took the step of publishing a long article entitled "A Workers Commission Must Try Varga." The article's main positions on Varga and the OCI's baseless accusations were eventually confirmed by the deliberations of the Commission of Inquiry; our stand might have been drawn directly from the Commission's conclusions. We wrote:

"Unfortunately, the irresponsible criminal conduct of the OCI, which refused to present its case against Varga honestly before the workers movement, is surpassed only by the astonishingly light-minded response of the Varga group to accusations which, if they are founded on fact, would define this tendency as a sinister clique."

—*Spartacist* [édition française], February 1975

While denouncing the OCI's Stalinist methods as "foreign to the methodology and morality of Bolshevism," we established that in his letters Varga "showed himself to be anti-Semitic, racist and utterly cynical...a basically dishonest individual [acting] in bad faith." [See box for some characteristic excerpts from Varga's letters.]

From February until November 1975 the iSt, represented by its French sympathizing section, the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), led the battle for an impartial commission, without the participation of the accused LIRQI. The record of this fight is detailed in our "Declaration to the Commission of Inquiry on the Varga Affair" of 3 November 1975. During this entire period the SWP held itself aloof, no doubt hoping the Commission would never see the light of day. Since at least the end of 1974 the SWP had been maneuvering with the OCI to facilitate the latter's entry into the USec, and it was obvious that a condemnation of the OCI's lies by an impartial and authoritative commission of inquiry would damage these maneuvers.

As for the LCR and LO, they never objected in principle to participating in a commission which included the LIRQI. LO went so far as to say that it was prepared to accept the OCI into a commission alongside the LIRQI! The iSt "Declaration" of 3 November was drawn up after a meeting on 30 October 1975 during which the LCR and LO had agreed to participate in a commission on the bases proposed by the LIRQI—i.e., condemning in advance the OCI's accusations. At the meeting where our declaration was read, however, the LCR and LO pulled back from the LIRQI "commission"—not for reasons of principle, but

solely for reasons of "efficiency" and "credibility."

Thus the Vargaites were in a position to accuse the LCR and LO of capitulating to the iSt. This accusation was not totally unfounded, as the LCR's and LO's hesitations are to be explained above all by their factionally motivated desire to condemn the OCI. Any means would have sufficed, including the LIRQI's "commission." If these organizations surrendered to the principled arguments of the representative of the LTF—a tiny organization compared to the LCR and LO—it is no doubt because they believed that a condemnation of the OCI by a commission which did not include the LIRQI would have greater authority. The recognized authority of the iSt regarding the "Varga affair" also stemmed from the fact that we were the only organization to check the OCI's translations of Varga's [Hungarian-language] materials.

When its maneuver blew up in its face, the LIRQI set up its own "commission of inquiry," of which it was in fact the only component. Not content with accusing the LCR and LO of capitulating to the iSt, an enraged LIRQI accused the iSt of being agents of the OCI because of our principled refusal to participate in the captive LIRQI commission. As we said in our "Declaration":

"We cannot take part in a cynical operation totally devoid of the most minimal democratic principles, whose only aim appears to be to whitewash Varga in the hope of factional advantage against the OCI. We are equally against whitewashes and frame-ups."

—*WV* No. 85, 14 November 1975

The Commission Meets

On LO's initiative, a real commission of inquiry was formed in March 1976. From April until December 1976, the Commission gathered testimony, documents, whatever was relevant to the "Varga affair."

At the beginning, the OCI took a very aggressive attitude toward the Commission. It repeatedly stated that the Commission should confine itself to "authenticating" the documents from Varga's archives, and congratulated itself that the members of the Commission "admitted" the documents' authenticity. The OCI suggested over and over in *IO* (in June 1976 and again in October) that the iSt shared its accusations against Varga. To make this amalgam, the OCI quoted our criticisms of Varga (passing over in silence our criticisms of the OCI) in a way calculated to suggest that we shared its characterization of Varga. It was only after the iSt addressed a letter of protest to *IO* that the OCI ceased to put forth this kind of amalgam.

In throwing up this smokescreen, the OCI hoped to obscure the fact that the real question was whether or not the documents confirmed the OCI's accusations. It is now established that they do not confirm the charges, which are therefore revealed as slanders. All the more so since the OCI representatives systematically refused to present other elements which might have aided in "proving" the accusations; it must be concluded that "other" proofs do not exist.

The OCI's attitude toward the Commission came out in its refusal (despite its protestations to the contrary) to make the entire archives available to the Commission or to groups which had requested them. Testifying before the Commission on 22 April 1976, Claude Chisserey of the OCI leadership claimed that the 80 percent of the archives which the OCI kept to itself consisted of bulletins and

documents internal to the OCI and thus he "saw no point" in turning them over to the Commission—which, said Chisserey, alluding disingenuously to the exchange of internal bulletins between the OCI and SWP, the Commission was certainly familiar with already. But the SWP representative later stated that the SWP had never received any such bulletins.

Later, the OCI refused to allow Pierre Broué and Jean-Jacques Marie (who had collaborated with Varga on the journal of his Institute) or Roger Monnier (with whom Varga had left his archives) to testify before the Commission.

Toward the end of the Commission's deliberations, the OCI found itself obliged to testify once more. Unable to reply to the questions posed by Commission members, Pierre Lambert was repeatedly reduced to enraged mutterings such as:

"Draw whatever conclusion you like, listen, it's your business. I'm not here for that.... You're not here to ask me questions about my organisation."

—testimony, 16 December 1976

Yet the OCI's utter irresponsibility at the time that Varga joined emerges with perfect clarity from Lambert's testimony. First of all, he admitted that Varga's archives had been accessible to the OCI ever since Varga joined in about 1962: "this was a fellow who kept his archives, at his place everything was well classified, etc." Then Lambert explicitly declared that, prior to Varga's joining, "nobody asked him" for explanations of his political activity and that "if we had asked him, he didn't have to say anything." As for the OCI's attitude toward the Varga archives at that time, Lambert was eloquent: "They were letters in Hungarian mostly, in Russian. Not problems of direct

interest to us." As the Spartacist tendency said in our draft conclusions, the OCI had:

"...a special responsibility to try to examine these archives, given the central importance of a complete and unambiguous break with imperialism on the part of those who claim to have broken with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the USSR."

But all these "problems"—including the possibility of agents infiltrating would-be Trotskyists' ranks—did not "interest" the OCI!

Now, there are two possibilities. One, that the OCI is telling the truth: it was not familiar with Varga's past, because "there were no problems of direct interest" to the OCI. In that case, it would seem that the OCI accepted Varga without worrying in the least about possible infiltration by police agents—KGB or CIA—into its organization, without asking him the slightest question about his previous political activity. Or two—and this seems more likely—that the OCI was aware of Varga's character and a good part of his past, but covered it up in

continued on next page

"The initial mistake was that neither Sanyi nor you oriented to the State Department. In my opinion, we have to do everything to begin to orient so that normal links can be created with the State Department."

—Balazs Nagy [M. Varga] to Sztaray Zoltan, 19 December 1958

"About my characterization of Zinner, I'm not an anti-semitic either, but let's look things in the face: the Jewish question exists. I don't hate them, but I'm fed up with their trying to act in our name; they are trying to lead Hungarians without understanding what it's about.... Fortunately the young Oxford Jews, *for the time being*, listen to us more than the old Jews, but for how long?"

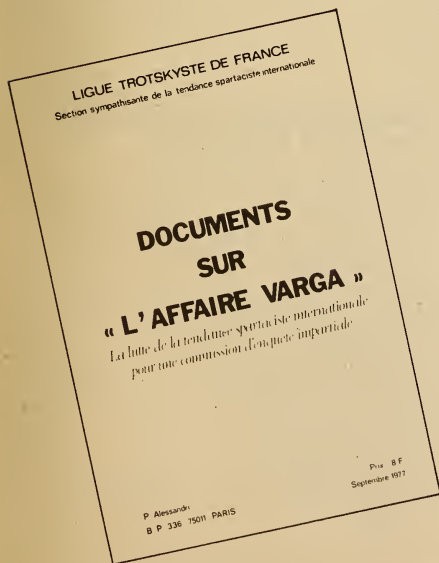
—Nagy/Varga to Sztaray Zoltan, 4 June 1958

"In our reply we should give the impression that he is a provocateur.... In short, it is time to exclude this dirty yid from the cultural milieu."

—Nagy/Varga to Joska Molnar, 4 March 1959

"In my opinion the Belgians were wrong to grant independence [to the Congo] with no preparation, after a paternalistic colonialism. They had a policy of treating the Blacks like children and suddenly they want to apply the most liberal of policies. That won't work. But that's no reason for the Blacks to be irresponsible."

—letter by Nagy/Varga, 9 August 1960



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order to show off its "Eastern European work." It is certainly no accident that the OCI's noble concern about the character of the main leader of its much-vaunted "Eastern European work" dates from the emergence of political differences with Varga.

For us as Trotskyists, it is essential to verify the total break from any illusions that the Stalinist bureaucracy will reform itself, as well as from Stalinophobia, on the part of militants like Varga who come out of the degenerated and deformed workers states, before accepting them as members.

Still on the defensive, the OCI several months later drew the Commission's attention to an interview with Varga in a Spanish newspaper and, in one final brief, urged the Commission to uphold "at least" the iSt's position:

"Starting from the documents, Varga cannot be characterized—at the least—differently than did *Spartacist*, as a 'highly dubious' figure; i.e., to the extent that it is not a question of a 'moral' characterization, as an individual who had kept up a certain kind of relations with the imperialist dens."

—letter, 8 March 1977

SWP: OCI's Best Defender

The Commission was also the scene of a factional struggle between the two wings of the USec. In the beginning, the SWP, trying its best to protect the OCI, did not even want testimony taped! More generally, the SWP representative systematically intervened to limit the scope of criticisms against the OCI. In the last analysis, the SWP had to grant that the OCI had proved nothing—and that the OCI employs violence against competing organizations—but still maintained that the main culprit was... Varga! It is the responsibility of the SWP above all that the Commission's conclusions do not state the obvious: the lack of proof of the OCI's accusations against Varga renders them lying and slanderous. It was also the SWP which insisted on weakening the rejection of the accusations, substituting "these accusations have not been proved" for "...have in no way been proved."

As for LO and the LCR, in their common aim of scoring points on the OCI they maintained that Varga's past was of interest only to his own organization and that a condemnation of the OCI would suffice. Thus LO refused to draw the obvious conclusion about Varga, already contained in the draft conclusions submitted by the LTF representative, mandated by the iSt:

"...although Varga himself publicly admitted having undertaken consciously anti-communist activities in order to 'combat Marxism,' he has never explained—nor has he explicitly renounced—certain formulations found in his letters at that time, which enable us to characterize his attitudes as anti-Semitic and racist. Varga therefore appears as a highly dubious figure."

The LCR and LO wanted to condemn the OCI but refused to characterize Varga's attitude; the SWP, by way of contrast, was more than willing to characterize Varga, but refused to condemn the OCI. Caught in a bind, the Commission rejected the conclusions drafted by the iSt,

and called instead on the SWP reformists to write the most innocuous conclusions possible. Though the LCR might have preferred to condemn the OCI, it refused to break with its partner in the USec rotten bloc.

Seizing the pretext that the conclusions did not characterize the OCI's accusations against Varga as false because unproved, LO refused to sign the conclusions. The iSt, on the other hand, agreed to sign the Commission's conclusions on the condition that an appended iSt statement be published with them. While the conclusions represented the absolute minimum of what had been established by the Commission, the iSt signed them in the interest of arriving at clear and authoritative conclusions. LO's refusal to sign—under an obvious pretext—can only undermine the Commission's authority and thus lessen the impact of the very conclusions which LO claims to support.

All these petty and factionally motivated maneuvers stand in complete contradiction with the methods and traditions established by the Dewey Commission. While maintaining a sense of historical proportion, we must recall that Trotsky strongly insisted that—since the Dewey Commission had amassed sufficient proofs to show that Trotsky and Sedov were not guilty—it was both just and necessary to take one step further and accept the moral and political responsibility for drawing the conclusion that the Moscow Trials were frame-ups.

In opposition to all the other organizations participating in the Commission, the iSt assumes this responsibility in drawing a two-sided conclusion: since the OCI has adduced no sufficient proof to back up its accusations against Varga, these accusations must be characterized as false and therefore lying and slanderous. The OCI's practice of violence against the Vargaite is therefore shown to be drawn from the Stalinist arsenal. On the other hand, Varga's refusal to explain himself—his past and the content of his letters—shows him to be a shady character, a "highly dubious" figure. ■

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Conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry into the Varga Affair

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 165,
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Michel Varga (the political pseudonym used by Balasz Nagy) is today the main leader of the Ligue Internationale de Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale (International League Reconstructing the Fourth International—LIRQI), which now simply proclaims itself the "Fourth International." After the 1956 uprising in Hungary he emigrated to West Europe and, in the late 1950's, became a founder of the "Imre Nagy Institute of Political Science" and of its journal, *Études*. The purpose of this institute, as Varga presented it in 1958, was to analyze problems of socialism, particularly the problems of Hungary from 1948 to 1956. For these projects Varga entered into contact with various groups and individuals in the workers movement.

In 1961 Michel Varga broke with the Institute and the journal. In 1962 he joined the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI). Toward the end of 1972 a split occurred between a group led by Varga and the OCI. The group founded by Varga first took the name OCI-LIRQI Faction.

In 1973 the OCI published material (translated from Hungarian) excerpted from Varga's archives which it had obtained. This material dealt with the period of 1957-1960, and the excerpts published by the OCI are mostly parts of Varga's correspondence. On the basis of these excerpts, the OCI accused Varga of being an agent of the CIA and the KGB.

On 27 March 1976 the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, Lutte Ouvrière, Socialist Workers Party USA, the international Spartacist tendency and the Workers Socialist League (Great Britain) decided to form a Commission of Inquiry on the basis of the following declaration:

"Some time ago, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) put forth certain accusations, asserting that Balasz Nagy, known as Michel Varga, was an 'agent paid by the CIA' and a GPU provocateur.' The leaders of the LIRQI, the organization of which Michel Varga is a member, have called for a 'workers commission of inquiry' to take a position on 'the campaign of unfounded accusations launched by the OCI leadership' as well as on 'the extension of these accusations to the International League [LIRQI] as such, going as far as repeated physical attacks upon militants of the OCI-LIRQI faction [the French LIRQI group], in particular during the joint demonstrations against Francoism and the leafletting outside the meeting to free Soviet mathematician Leonid Plyushch.'

"We consider that such accusations against a militant or an organization are sufficiently serious that it is incumbent upon the entire revolutionary movement to determine whether or not they are justified. That is why we have decided to constitute ourselves as a Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of inviting the OCI leadership to present all evidence it claims to possess, and in order to request all those who could furnish evidence concerning this matter to come and testify.

"The Commission's goal is a scrupulous verification of the facts and documents, which it will make public. In order for

this verification to take place with the greatest possible authority, it invites all organizations claiming adherence to the revolutionary workers movement to participate actively in its deliberations."

—signed by representatives of:
Lutte Ouvrière
Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire
Socialist Workers Party
international Spartacist tendency
Workers Socialist League

After a year of proceedings, the Commission of Inquiry now feels that it has come to its end. It has recorded testimony and sought to verify it to the degree possible.

For practical reasons, the representative of the Workers Socialist League was unable to participate regularly in the Commission's work. Five persons participated regularly: André Frys (LO), André Roussel (LO), Gus Horowitz (SWP), Georges Marion (LCR) and Jean Lesueur (iSt). This report is made by the following three participants in the Commission of Inquiry: Gus Horowitz (SWP), Jean Lesueur (iSt), Georges Marion (LCR).

I Preliminary Conclusions

The members of the Commission of Inquiry, at the end of their proceedings, wish to formulate the following preliminary observations dealing with the ongoing development of the inquiry itself.

1) On two occasions members of the OCI—first Claude Chisserey and Gérard Bloch, then Pierre Lambert—agreed to answer the Commission's questions. But numerous letters and requests by the Commission of Inquiry for testimony from other members of the OCI remain unanswered by the OCI. Pierre Lambert, for one, stated concerning this matter: "We will not allow the Commission of Inquiry to investigate inside the OCI. The goal of your Commission is to state whether the documents produced by the OCI are authentic or not." Concerning the use of violence by members of the OCI against the LIRQI, subsequently the LOR [Revolutionary Workers League] (name adopted by the French section of the LIRQI), the OCI representatives denied this, or refused to reply.

2) It was at the request of the LIRQI that the organizations making up the Commission of Inquiry decided to form it. But the LIRQI demanded that the Commission of Inquiry be formed on the basis of an a priori recognition that the OCI's accusations were slanders. Seeing that the organizations in question did not share its point of view, the LIRQI then formed its own commission of inquiry, the "Commission of Inquiry against the Slanders about Michel Varga," of which it is in fact the only member. Subsequently, on one occasion, LIRQI members agreed to testify before the Commission on the question of the [OCI's] use of violence. Rejecting the

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Conclusions on Varga Affair ...

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Commission in advance as a "maneuver," Michel Varga explicitly refused any collaboration with the Commission.

II Basic Conclusions

Despite the attitude of the OCI and the LOR toward the Commission of Inquiry, the undersigned members of it have arrived at the following conclusions, which they share in common:

1) Was Varga a KGB agent?

The OCI has not furnished any evidence proving that Michel Varga had relations with the KGB or the Soviet government. According to the words of the OCI leaders themselves, this accusation is based solely on "political reasoning."

According to the Commission, this accusation is therefore unproved.

2) Was Varga a CIA agent?

In order to assert this, the OCI bases itself mainly on the "Varga archives" relating to the period 1957-1960.

These archives show that during this period, after leaving Hungary and before joining the OCI, Michel Varga sought financial support from many sources, including sources close to the American government, the [U.S.] State Department or the Free Europe Committee, in order to finance the Imre Nagy Institute. The archives show that he actively sought this money, knowing full well what he was doing and attempting to hide the source of the money.

But these archives do not prove that at this time Varga was a CIA agent. They do not prove that Varga was a CIA agent after he joined the ranks of the OCI in 1962, nor that he had contact with the CIA during this period.

According to the Commission, the accusation that he belonged to the CIA is therefore unproved.

3) Did the OCI know of Varga's past before accepting him in its ranks?

There are no documents which make it possible to answer this question.

- In the LIRQI's publications, Michel Varga has asserted that the OCI was fully informed about his past before he joined its ranks. But Michel Varga refused to give his testimony to the Commission.

- As for the OCI, it has reasserted that it did not know of Varga's past as it appears in light of the archives. Pierre Lambert repeated this in his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry.

- The Commission also heard the testimony of Albi and Kaldy, two Hungarian militants presently members of the LCR and LO respectively, who worked with Varga after 1962 in his Hungarian Trotskyist organization, the LRSH [Revolutionary League of Hungarian Socialists]. According to their statements, the OCI was in possession of sufficient information about Varga's past to have warranted suspicion concerning the source of financing for the Imre Nagy Institute. However, Pierre Lambert testified that in 1962 the OCI had no grounds for such suspicion.

- Two OCI leaders, Pierre Broué and Jean-Jacques Marie, collaborated with the journal edited by the Imre Nagy Institute, *Études*, on several occasions prior to 1962. They therefore at least knew of the Institute's existence. But the Commission was unable to hear their testimony concerning

the extent of their knowledge of the Institute in this period, due to the OCI's refusal [to allow them to testify]. For the same reason it was unable to hear testimony from Roger Monnier, the OCI member with whom Varga had deposited his archives.

The Commission is therefore not in a position to know whether the OCI learned about the archives only in 1973.

4) The use of violence.

The Commission heard testimony indicating that on several occasions the OCI has used violence against LIRQI members in order to prevent them from distributing their press, and not in self-defense. This testimony comes from different individuals and different organizations.

The Commission is therefore convinced that these attacks did indeed take place. It is inadmissible for an organization in the workers movement to act in this fashion, and this must stop.

* * * * *

The Commission of Inquiry's minutes are public in nature, before the entire working-class movement, in order to allow all working-class militants who may so desire to form their own opinion. The Commission makes the entire workers movement judge of the "Varga affair" and of the attitude adopted by its protagonists.

Paris, 29 May 1977

signed by:

Gus Horowitz (Socialist Workers Party)

Jean Lesueur (international Spartacist tendency)*

Georges Marion (Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire)

* The international Spartacist tendency wishes to note that it votes in favor of these conclusions with the following reservations, whose reproduction constitutes a condition to signing the conclusions:

1) The OCI's unproved accusations must be characterized as slanders;

2) Varga's current attitude, namely to refuse to shed light on his past, must lead to characterizing him as a suspicious and highly dubious individual;

3) The OCI's use of violence against Varga's supporters must be characterized as deriving from Stalinist methods.

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Draft Conclusions on the Varga Affair Submitted by the iSt

—reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 165,
8 July 1977

The Commission of Inquiry was formed by Lutte Ouvrière, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the Socialist Workers Party and the international Spartacist tendency, with the sole aim of arriving at conclusions about the "Varga affair." Although composed of organizations otherwise having serious political differences among themselves, the Commission is united in its determination to safeguard the workers movement against the alien practices of violence and slander and to denounce such practices whenever they may occur, thereby rejecting any attempt to turn it into the tool of any political alliance or regroupment.

On the basis of testimony and documents presented to it, the Commission of Inquiry has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The Commission notes that, although representatives of the OCI twice appeared before it, the OCI in fact refused to collaborate with the Commission of Inquiry, above all by not turning over to it the entire documentation at its disposal; and by refusing to allow testimony from its members who, based on their own experience, could have answered the Commission's questions—on the pretext that the Commission should limit itself to stating whether or not the documents presented by the OCI were authentic or not.

2. The Commission also denounces the attitude of the LIRQI and its organizations toward the Commission. With the failure of the LIRQI's attempts to prevent the creation of an independent Commission of Inquiry in the best traditions of the workers movement—in particular that represented by the Dewey Commission—the LIRQI set up a so-called "impartial" commission composed overwhelmingly of its own organizations! The LIRQI's slanders of the Commission, which it terms "Lambertist agents," merely show its impotent fury following the refusal by the organizations which formed the Commission to cover for its maneuvers.

3. The OCI did not present any sufficient proof to demonstrate the correctness of its accusations against Balasz Nagy, known as Michel Varga; namely that Michel Varga was supposedly a paid agent of the CIA and KGB. Moreover, the OCI dishonestly manipulated the quotations it extracted from Varga's letters. The testimony, documents and information gathered by the Commission lead to the conclusion that these accusations can only be considered false, and therefore lying and slanderous.

4. It goes without saying that the Commission of Inquiry condemns the OCI's procedures, which are of a Stalinist nature. The OCI may have been familiar with the "Varga archives." It is quite probable that it at least knew of their existence. The OCI therefore had a special responsibility to try to examine these archives, given the central importance of a complete and unambiguous break with imperialism on the part of those who claim to have broken with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Thus the OCI chose to launch a slanderous campaign,

whose sole aim was to intimidate and discredit Varga, only after his political differences with the OCI appeared.

5. The Commission condemns the scandalous light-mindedness of Michel Varga, who refused to appear before it or to make any deposition. He has thereby refused to clarify his present position vis-à-vis his past activities. Consequently, the Commission can only note the fact that between 1957 and 1960-61 Varga consciously solicited funds from sources functioning as agents of American imperialism, and even from the U.S. State Department. And although Varga himself publicly admitted having undertaken consciously anti-communist activities in order to "combat Marxism," he has never explained—nor has he explicitly renounced—certain formulations to be found in his letters at that time, which enable us to characterize his attitudes as anti-Semitic and racist. Varga therefore appears as a highly dubious figure.

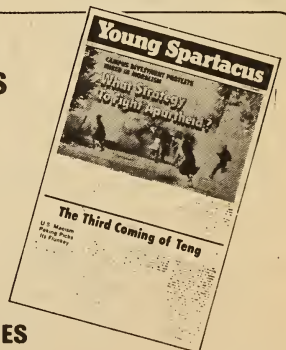
6. According to depositions taken by the Commission of Inquiry, the OCI has for a long time practiced violence against competing organizations in the workers movement. The OCI simply used its unfounded accusations against Varga as a pretext—following the emergence of political differences—to physically attack members of organizations which included Varga. The Commission vigorously condemns the OCI for its slanders and its violence of a purely Stalinist sort, alien to the best practices of the workers movement.

In addition, the fact that the LIRQI invoked bourgeois justice against members of the OCI demonstrates that despite its protestations, it does not fundamentally differ from the OCI on the question of workers democracy.

[Paris, December 1976]

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Varga Commission Finishes Work

OCI Slanders the Dubious Varga

The following article is adapted from the introduction to a French-language bulletin of documents relating to the Commission of Inquiry into the "Varga affair" recently published by the Ligue Trotskyste de France, sympathizing section of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt).

By reprinting materials published in *Workers Vanguard* and *Spartacist* (édition française) over the past two and a half years, *Documents sur "l'affaire Varga"* documents the struggle waged by the iSt for a genuinely impartial commission of inquiry into the serious charges leveled against Michel Varga by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI).

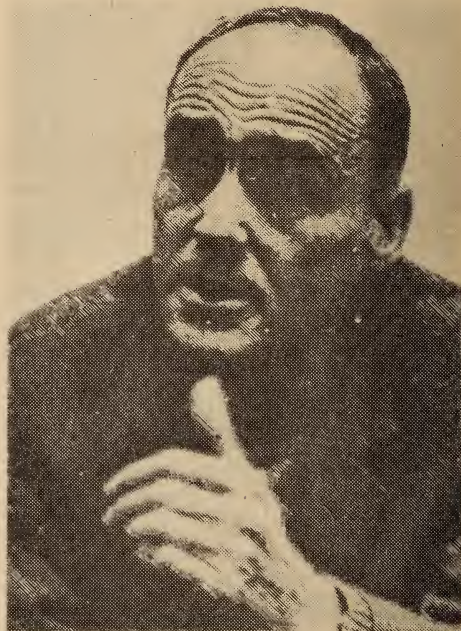
It includes the statement of the iSt to the cover-up "commission" created by the Vargaite (see *Workers Vanguard* No. 85, 14 November 1975); correspondence regarding the formation of the Commission of Inquiry; exchanges between its members and the Vargaite documenting Varga's refusal to testify before the Commission; excerpts from testimony to the Commission by Pierre Lambert of the OCI, Franco Grisolia and several former members of the Vargaite organization; a list of documents and testimony received by the Commission; and the concluding report of the Commission as well as draft conclusions submitted by the iSt, both of which are also reprinted below.

The bulletin may be ordered from Pascal Alessandri, B.P. 336, 75011 Paris, France, or from Spartacist Publishing Co., Box 1377, GPO, New York, N.Y. 10001.

The documents reproduced in this bulletin testify to the struggle by the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) to construct, and then to carry through to a conclusion, the work of a commission of inquiry to investigate the "Varga affair." They document efforts by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) and the Vargaite group (LIRQI, which now styles itself the "Fourth International") first to block even the existence of an impartial commission in the tradition of the Dewey commission of inquiry into the Moscow Trials, and then to create obstacles to the Commission's work. And they reveal the equivocations of the other organizations—the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), Lutte Ouvrière (LO) and the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—which participated in the Commission.

Origins of the Commission

Although increasingly sharp political differences separated the OCI and Varga since at least September 1972, it was not until the end of June 1973, after the "discovery" of Varga's archives around May 1973, that the OCI publicly accused Varga—falsely, as the Commission established—of being an agent of the Stalinist secret police (*Informations Ouvrières*, 27 June 1973) and, later, of the CIA as well. It subsequently took more than six months for



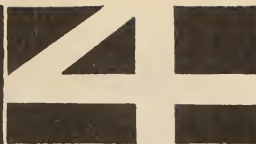
Michel Varga

Jaume Mor

the OCI to state that working-class organizations could examine these archives, and it was not until March 1974 that a pamphlet announced in the first *IO* article finally appeared.

The "Varga affair" went hand in hand with a very rapid right turn of the OCI, expressed above all by its capitulation before the popular front in the 1973 and 1974 elections, as well as its rapprochement, beginning in early 1973, with the reformist SWP. In a centrist organization such as the OCI, the formation of a left tendency opposing the leadership's right turn might have been expected. And in fact wobbles showed up in *IO* which looked like the stirrings of left oppositionists in the OCI. But the "Varga affair" cut short any potential crystallization of a serious left tendency in the OCI. Just as the Vargaite cynically sought to take up positions to the left of the OCI, so too the OCI took advantage of its accusations against Varga to seal off anything resembling an opposition. It was obvious that at the outset the OCI was counting on the disinterest of the

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SL Confronts USec Leader on U.S. Tour

Ernest Mandel: A Centrist For All Seasons

An abbreviated version of this article was distributed at a meeting in New York on May 4 where Mandel spoke on the world economic crisis. For an account of this meeting see "Mandel Weasels on Pop Front," Workers Vanguard No. 205, 12 May 1978.

Ernest Mandel is a world-class left-wing academic, jet-setting from continent to continent to give lectures and interviews, a prolific author of books and articles, a "star" whose views are eagerly sought by trendy publications and even the most stuffy bourgeois newspapers and journals of opinion. He is perhaps the best-known of the fraternity of economists who claim the Marxist tradition, and much closer to orthodox Leninism than a Sweezy or Bettelheim. He is, finally, the very image of an engagé intellectual, darting from classrooms at Louvain or Berlin's "Free University" to meetings of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" of which he is the principal spokesman, to conferences with planning officials in Havana. To the mass media and imperialist governments Ernest Mandel is the embodiment of the "Trotskyite menace," a bête noir to be stopped at borders by secret police or excluded by McCarthyite legislation.

Leaving aside the periodic reactionary hysteria about a "terrorist Fourth International," Mandel enjoys a positive reputation across an amazingly broad spectrum, ranging from out-and-out liberals to unblushing Stalinists. This contrasts so sharply with the opprobrium and persecution directed against Leon Trotsky and the Fourth Internationalist communists of his day that one is moved to ask why. If this man is the irreconcilable opponent of all existing regimes of class rule or bureaucratic oppression on the planet, the resolute defender of authentic Marxism and Leninism against every hue of revisionism, a fiery denouncer of those who betray the cause of the proletariat—then why

continued on page 2



Spartacist

Ernest Mandel speaking in New York City on May 4.

**"Radical Egalitarian"
Stalinism: A Post
Mortem6**

**Swedish USec Face to Face
with Trotskyism32**

Mandel...

isn't he universally hated? *The answer is simple: Ernest Mandel is not a Trotskyist but an impostor. Anybody who came to hear a genuine Bolshevik-Leninist should ask for his money back.*

In reality, although he knows quite well what Bolshevik intransigence is and can write an orthodox polemic as facilely as he churns out opportunist apologetics, for the last quarter century Mandel has fought *against* a Trotskyist perspective and program at every crucial juncture. He has employed his agile mind and his impressive erudition to dream up revisionist "theoretical" cover for every petty-bourgeois radical opportunist craze: student power, peasant-guerrilla "armed struggle," popular frontism. In the 1960's when "student power" was in its heyday he joined right in the New Left fad. Rather than emphasizing that the proletariat was still the key, he wrote that the workers' struggles had been bought off under "neocapitalism," and his supporters advocated a program for "red universities." When "Che" Guevara was a cult hero on the campuses Mandel, far from insisting on the need for a Leninist proletarian vanguard party to lead the struggles of the working masses, became an armchair guerrillero and ordered his followers to join Castro's guerrillaist "International," the stillborn OLAS.

Today he is again chasing after the latest fashionable trends in Europe: popular frontism and Eurocommunism. Where Trotsky called proletarian opposition to the Popular Front the key to revolutionary strategy in this epoch and "the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism," Mandelites in France refused to label the Union of the Left a popular front and, fearful of "isolation," followed the masses in voting for its candidates. And while the Eurocommunists are caught up in Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign, Mandel says he has "hopes and confidence" that inveterate reformist traitors like Spanish CP leader Carrillo—who crossed a picket line at Yale to demonstrate his appreciation to the State Department for letting him visit

America—"will return to the path of revolutionary Marxism!"

Even people who are relatively unacquainted with Trotskyism can easily see that such a man has nothing to do with the heroic Left Oppositionists whose leader was slain on Stalin's orders in 1940. For if student power spontaneists, Guevarist guerrillaists and the popular front can lead the revolutionary struggle, then who needs Trotskyist parties? In fact, if the Stalinist reformists of the Spanish CP can "return" to revolutionary Marxism, then Trotsky was dead wrong in writing off the Comintern as definitively gone over to the side of the bourgeoisie after Stalin allowed Hitler to march to power unhindered in 1933. Then the founding of the Fourth International five years later was, at best, a terrible mistake.

"The Many Faces and Long Waves of Ernest Mandel"

In New York Mandel will be speaking on the world economic crisis. It is on the subject of economics that he has gained renown as a popularizer and interpreter of Marx in the period of monopoly capitalism. His textbook, *Marxist Economic Theory*, is the most widely read volume of its kind, and Mandel has a certain aura of theoretical innovation, such as his rediscovery (elaborated in his book *Late Capitalism*) of the "long wave" theories of the Russian economist Kondratiev. He often appears to be orthodox compared to other pseudo-Marxist economists, such as Paul Sweezy who distorts the labor theory of value to justify his New Left theory of a crisis-free monopoly capitalism; or Charles Bettelheim, who has to redefine capitalism in order to justify the Maoist dogma that the USSR is "social-imperialist." But in reality, Mandel's economic writings are stepchildren to his political appetites, the purest impressionism dressed up in Marxoid jargon.

To take but one example, just *why* did our "theoretician" come up with Kondratiev "long waves"? (His contention is that the period between 1945 and 1966 was a "long post-war phase of rapid growth," during which supposedly effective countercyclical capitalist state policies made the recurrence of a 1929-style crash impossible. In contrast, we are—according to his view—currently in a long-term downturn in which the economic struggles of labor run up against the bosses' profit greed.) To begin with, Mandel has no economic data to back up his contentions: none are available in the 19th century, he deliberately ignores the mid- and late-1920's boom to show the entire interwar period as a down wave, and the "post-war boom" is a myth—being quite uneven internationally, with plenty of ups and downs.

No, the origin of Mandel's long wave theory is political, not economic. It is a dishonest, objectivist means of excusing the fact that during the 1960's he wrote off the working class of the imperialist countries as a revolutionary force. At that time he did not refer to "late capitalism" but "*neocapitalism*" based on the "third industrial revolution" of automation and nuclear power. In his brochure, *An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory*, Mandel states that: "The neo-capitalist phase which we are now witnessing, is that of a long term expansion of capitalism...." This directly contradicts the Leninist thesis that the imperialist epoch is that of the *decay* of productive

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forces—"the death agony of capitalism" as Trotsky put it in the title of the founding program of the Fourth International.

And what are the implications of this long-term expansion? Mandel writes:

"The long term cycle which began with the Second World War, and in which we still remain... has, on the contrary, been characterized by expansion, and because of this expansion the margin for negotiation and discussion between the bourgeoisie and the working class has been enlarged. The possibility has been created for strengthening the system on the basis of granting concessions to the workers... close collaboration between an expansive bourgeoisie and the conservative forces of the labor movement and is fundamentally sustained by a rising trend in the standard of living of the workers."

—*An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory*

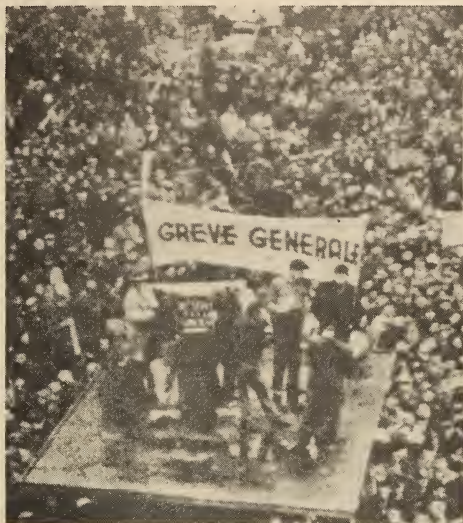
Try presenting that line to the petty-bourgeois radical milieu today! Mandel would be laughed off the stage. But at the time this was a popular theme of all the "new working class" theories and, as always, our "Marxist" economist picked up what was in vogue and elaborated a theory to fit the superficial impression.

As for the bosses' willingness to "buy off" the workers, it suffices to recall the brutality with which the American bourgeoisie beat down the 1959 steel strike to expose this claim.

But Mandel's theory is more than a distortion of the facts: it is an excuse for betrayal. The most concrete case is his own treacherous behavior in the 1960-61 Belgian general strike (an event which according to his schema of "neocapitalism" should never have occurred). Mandel was editor of a newspaper, *La Gauche*, which posed as the voice of a broad left wing in the Belgian Socialist Party (similar to the *Tribune* in England today) under the mantle of André Renard, a leading union bureaucrat. *La Gauche* was putting forward at the time a program of "structural reforms" including abolition of the "*loi unique*" (the Christian Democratic government's anti-labor austerity program), nationalization of the power industry, government economic planning, controls on the monopolies, halving the military budget, etc. In other words, an extremely modest social-democratic reform program.

As a general strike developed against the *loi unique*, when the workers were demanding in mass meetings "Down with the Eyskens government!" Mandel's *La Gauche* wrote on 24 December 1960 that "The workers fear that if the government falls in the present social crisis, the Belgian Socialist Party will enter a new coalition government..." This, he said, would only be acceptable if "1) the new government abandoned the *loi unique*, 2) if the essential points in the structural reforms be kept as government policy." So in the name of "structural reforms" Mandel announced his acceptance of a bourgeois coalition government!

But this was not all. The 1 January 1961 edition of *La Gauche* carried a red headline: "Organize the March on Brussels!" Unfortunately for Mandel he had jumped the gun on his mentor Renard, who was not about to provoke a showdown with the Eyskens government. The next week *La Gauche* argued against concentrating forces on a single time and place and instead called for guerrilla tactics, and



The Newsletter

Belgian general strike of 1960-61: Mandel withdrew call for march on Brussels when "left" bureaucrat Renard refused to support it.

by 14 January Mandel felt constrained to publish a cringing capitulation:

"We have been reproached for having launched the slogan of a march on Brussels.... Since we find that the demand has not been taken up by the leaders, we submit; but we point out that at the moment our call appeared last week, no indications on this subject were yet known."

It's true, of course. Had Mandel known Renard was strongly opposed to a march he would never have issued a call.

Another of the topics Mandel is speaking on during his current tour is the Paris May events of 1968. What he will not mention, however, is how his theory of "neocapitalism" led him to put forward a program telling the working masses *not* to fight for state power! At the time there were ten million workers on strike, threatening to break through the bureaucratic control of the CP and the unions. However, since "there is not yet a sufficiently influential, organized, unified vanguard, to the left of the CP, that could lead the masses to victory immediately," Mandel wrote, "It is here that the strategy of anti-capitalist structural reforms, 'transitional demands,' assumes all its validity" (*Militant*, 14 June 1968). For Trotskyists transitional demands are part of a program "unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat." Mandel, however, proclaimed that "the masses cannot seize power" and therefore called for "structural reforms" (workers control of production, opening company books, end of bank secrecy) which were explicitly *not* seen as a challenge to capitalist rule but only as "guarantees."

By the 1970's Mandel was no longer talking of "neocapitalism" and he soon discovered that the long wave of

continued on next page

Mandel...

the "post-war boom" had now headed downwards. What had changed, however, was not the economic situation. The economic conditions in France in 1968 and during Italy's "hot autumn" of 1969 were similar to the early 1960's. What happened was that in the French May events, the student vanguardists Mandel had been tailing discovered the working class. As the Maoist/syndicalist groups began to grow, the Mandelites, threatened with being outflanked on their left, shifted gears and began chasing after a "new mass [later, broad] vanguard" including radicalized workers. Mandel's current economic prognoses, while superficially more orthodox than his "neocapitalist" contortions, are in reality no closer to Trotskyism. They merely serve as an excuse for tailing after spontaneous working-class militancy and refusing to raise the full transitional program in the unions.

The Measure of the Man: How Mandel Became a Pabloist

Ernest Mandel broke with Trotskyism more than 25 years ago at a time of a great crisis in the Fourth International which led to a split in 1953 and the consequent destruction of the FI as the world party of socialist revolution. The cause of this terrible blow to world Trotskyism was Pabloist liquidationism, and after an initial hesitant step to oppose this revisionist current, Mandel soon broke and served as a lawyer, a cover for the liquidators. This capitulation revealed a key aspect of his character—*political cowardice*—which is incompatible with being a revolutionary leader. Ever since, Mandel has been essentially an intellectual prostitute, a pen for hire to whatever is the left cause of the moment. It is this which explains his wide popularity, for he takes up whatever is in style this season. But the price of this popularity is a constant refusal to provide revolutionary leadership—"to tell the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be."

In the late 1940's the Stalinist parties of West Europe, particularly France and Italy, were able to greatly extend and consolidate their influence as a result of their leading role in the resistance to Nazi occupation. The forces of the Fourth International, which had been greatly weakened through assassination by both the Stalinists and fascists during World War II, were largely on the margins of the workers movement. At the same time the onset of the Cold War led to a hardening of the Kremlin line, while the appearance of bureaucratically deformed workers states in East Europe and China led impressionists to conclude that perhaps the Stalinists could be forced to the left.

It was under these circumstances that the pressures of isolation took their toll on the Fourth International. The revisionist current which appeared was led by Michel Pablo, the head of the International Secretariat of the FI. In a January 1951 article entitled "Where Are We Going?" Pablo developed his "war/revolution" thesis according to which World War III between the U.S. and the USSR was imminent, and the West European workers movement would be subordinated to this dynamic. Moreover, under the pressure of the masses, wrote Pablo, "The Communist Parties retain the possibility in certain circumstances of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation." Therefore,



Morel

Popular-Front French Union of the Left: handshake of class collaboration.

seeing the possibility of revolutionary situations developing before the Trotskyist vanguard could amass significant resources, Pablo called for a policy of "entrism *sui generis*," in which the sections of the FI would enter the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties with the perspective of staying there for a long period to pressure the reformists to the left.

This program deprived the Fourth International of its reason for existence. Consequently resistance to Pablo's schema began to appear in many sections. When the leadership of the French section refused to go along with the recipe for "deep entrism" in the Communist Party, Pablo declared them suspended, in a bureaucratic move worthy of a petty Stalin. The first opposition to Pabloism, interestingly, came in the form of a document by Ernest Germain (the party name of Mandel), which became known as the "Ten Theses." On the face of it this was just a restatement of home truths about the counterrevolutionary policies of Stalinism. In actuality, though it bent over backwards not to attack Pablo by name, this was a veiled attack on the program put forward in "Where Are We Going?" Germain's tenth thesis stated:

"...it is because the new revolutionary wave contains in embryo the destruction of the Stalinist parties as such that we ought to be much closer today to the Communist workers. This is only one phase of our fundamental task: to construct new revolutionary parties."

Mandel/Germain, however, was not able to get the Pablo-dominated International Secretariat to adopt his theses. Having no stomach for a hard factional struggle—even though the very existence of the Fourth International was at stake—he succumbed to Pablo's pressures. Subsequently he became the hatchetman for the dictatorial general secretary against the majority leadership of the French section (PCI), which had supported his now-

abandoned "Ten Theses." In response to this cowardly treachery, Favre-Bleibtreu, head of the French anti-Pabloists wrote to Germain in July 1951:

"We always take the same pleasure in reading your documents, whose cultural level, richness of imagery, and style remind us that you remain the most brilliant writer of the International. But this reading confirms my belief that you lack one quality, the one most necessary to a leader: firmness of your political ideas.

"Today you magnanimously offer the PCI leadership a peaceful haven 'within the ranks of the International majority' where you yourself ingloriously found refuge, after a few passing impulses of resistance to Pablo's revisionist impulses. Pardon us for not following you on this path because in our view the International will not be built by maneuvering and especially not by your pitiful maneuvers." "Comrade Ernest Germain, renounce diversionary maneuvers, renounce your puerile and irresponsible double-crossing game, put forward and defend your ideas as we ourselves defend them."

—translated from *Spartacist* (édition française) No. 7, autumn 1974

It is not hard to imagine the bitterness of these comrades, who were being read out of the International, when the erudite "leader" Mandel collapsed at the slightest pressure. But the harm which befell them because of his perfidy does not compare to the crime perpetrated against the Chinese Trotskyists then being held in the jails of Mao Tse-tung's Stalinist regime. This horror story is documented in a letter by Peng Shu-tse, head of the Chinese section of the FI, to American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon in December 1953. Peng was first shocked to learn, some time after arriving in Europe, that Pablo considered Mao's party centrist and claimed Mao had absorbed the central theses

of the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution. Since Peng had been forced to flee China under the blows of Stalinist repression, this was a little hard to stomach.

So, too, was Pablo's resolution on China adopted by the International Executive Committee (IEC) in June 1952. "The worst thing is," wrote Peng, "that nobody can find a perspective for the Chinese Trotskyists in this resolution." Its supporters, he reported, called for dissolving the Chinese section in order to join the Communist Party. But the real shock came when he reported to a November 1952 IEC plenum on the brutal repression of the Chinese Trotskyists by Mao. Pablo replied that the massacre was not a deliberate action but a mistake and an exception. In May 1953 Peng submitted to the IEC an international appeal for aid from the Chinese Trotskyists and an open letter to the Mao regime protesting the killings and jailings. Pablo agreed to publish the former, but then suppressed it.

As to the open letter, Germain (by now Pablo's flunkie) informed Peng—who was a member of the IEC, and of the International Secretariat until Pablo purged him—that it should have expressed total support of the Maoist regime, praising its revolutionary achievements, and only then mentioned the facts of the persecution. Because Peng opposed the Peking regime as Stalinist, Mandel/Germain denounced him as a "hopeless sectarian" and refused to circulate the open letter to the International. The Chinese Trotskyists, said the revisionist Germain, were "refugees from a revolution"!

As if it were not enough to whitewash the Maoist repression—praising the Stalinist regime as revolutionary,

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C.F.D.T.

Sit down strike at Citroen auto plant during May 1968. While 10 million workers were out on strike, Mandel called for "anti-capitalist structural reforms."

"Radical Egalitarian" Stalinism: A Post Mortem

During the heyday of the New Left a generation of Western radicals came to politically embrace Stalinism in its "Third World" variants in large part because Cuba and China appeared to these impressionistic petty-bourgeois idealists to be egalitarian societies in struggle, unlike the seemingly complacent, stodgy, bureaucratized Soviet Union. For the last decade in the U.S. political identification with what could be called "Third World" Stalinist egalitarianism has been a dominant tendency in mainstream petty-bourgeois radicalism.

New Leftism first coalesced with "Third World" Stalinism over the Cuban revolution during the mid-1960's. In marked contrast to their Russian patrons the Cuban leadership appeared to be genuinely committed to humanistic and populist ideals, seemingly determined not to give up their old spartan guerrilla values or their vision of spreading the revolution throughout Latin America by fomenting "armed struggle." Contrary to the New Left illusions, the Cuban leaders were at bottom Khrushchevs in khaki. After their budding "détente" with Yankee imperialism was abruptly terminated by Washington and their cordial relations with the Kremlin estranged following what was regarded as a Soviet retreat over the 1962 missile crisis, the Cuban leaders had nothing to lose by adopting a militant posture.

What especially captivated the New Left was how Ernesto "Che" Guevara eloquently preached the need to combine "building socialism" with creating "socialist man." To New Leftists Guevara seemed to be speaking their language when he advocated a struggle to end alienated labor in Cuba that would start by replacing all material incentives with moral incentives. Guevara seemed to integrate two distinct New Left currents: regarding the "wretched of the earth" in the "Third World" as the sole revolutionary vanguard (Frantz Fanon), and viewing the question of "personal liberation" as a necessary but neglected goal of Marxist socialism (Herbert Marcuse).

Although the much-touted "radical" policies adopted by Castro produced a series of economic disasters instead of "socialist man" and were later scrapped in favor of a return to more orthodox Soviet-model methods, the New Left in the meantime had its attention diverted to China, then in the throes of the so-called "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." Starry-eyed radicals in the West took as good coin the Maoist demagoguery about struggling to eliminate bureaucratism and privilege and to create in China a society modeled after the Paris Commune. In reality an intra-bureaucratic power struggle launched by Mao only to oust his principle rivals in the regime and to whip the apparatus into line, the Cultural Revolution was idealized by many Leftists as a titanic campaign to institute "participatory democracy" for one fourth of the human race.

Whereas Guevara's specific economic (as opposed to his high-falutin' social) ideas advocated during the Cuban "Great Debate" had relatively little impact on the New



Ernesto "Che" Guevara.

Left, the Chinese Cultural Revolution made questions of economic policy, such as moral versus material incentives, a real issue among vicarious "radical" Stalinists. While Guevara had regarded material incentives as perhaps legitimate for "building socialism" Soviet-style but a fetter on creating "socialist man," Mao claimed that material incentives and wage differentials were a mortal threat to the very existence of "socialism" in China. Not only those who joined Maoist cadre organizations after the demise of the New Left but also those soft "Third World" enthusiasts who remained organizationally unaffiliated accepted the incredibly idealist Maoist dogma that "revisionists" (defined as anyone in the Chinese bureaucracy who opposed Mao) could restore capitalism in China simply through gradually expanding "bourgeois right" (material incentives and the like), i.e., a peaceful and possibly even surreptitious counterrevolution.

But history hasn't been kind to those who seek to glorify "Third World" Stalinist egalitarianism. If the economic policies of the Castro regime haven't caused significant disillusionment in the New Left radical milieu, the seemingly kaleidoscopic policy shifts associated with the revolving-door purges in People's China since the death of Mao certainly have. In October of 1976 the most prominent representatives of "radical" Maoism (Chiang

Ching, Yao Wen-yuan, Wang Hung-wen, Chang Chun-chiao) were suddenly purged and henceforth vilified as a high-living, double-dealing "Gang of Four" who spouted rhetoric about "restricting bourgeois right" only to conceal their allegedly nefarious schemes to restore a new bourgeoisie to power in China. Claiming the mantle of Maoism, the new regime headed by Hua Kuo-feng and Teng Hsiao-ping has promised to rectify the voluntarist idiocies attributed to the "Gang of Four" and to adopt more "pragmatic" economic policies, which include replacing moral incentives with material incentives and raising wages for the first time in 16 years. Thus, a recent issue of *Peking Review* (17 February) prominently featured on its front page a slogan which for years had been denounced by the "radical" Maoists as the epitome of Brezhnevite "revisionism": "To Each According to His Work: Socialist Principle of Distribution."

While Castro's abandonment of Guevarist-inspired economic policies produced no ripples among New Left circles, the purge of the most prominent self-proclaimed Maoist "egalitarians" proved to be a political bombshell in the camp of Maoists and pro-Peking "progressives" abroad. It was soon followed by an official campaign repudiating those policies and rhetoric that for a decade had been associated with "radical" Maoism. In the U.S. the question of material incentives versus "restricting bourgeois right" entered into the clique fight which recently ripped apart the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), once the largest pro-Peking organization in this country. To the extent that the RCP clique fight had a programmatic expression, the rival "headquarters"—the inveterate New Leftists around the "Chairman" Bob Avakian and the more orthodox Stalinists following Mickey Jarvis—clashed over the question of whether or not the new leadership in Peking was leading China down the "capitalist road." In his main "summing-up" of the fight Avakian directed his "main blow" at Teng's "Twenty Points," an economic policy platform that proposed granting wage increases and reinstituting material incentives.

Apart from those few dogged spirits who continue the search for "socialist man" among the peasantry of tiny Albania, New Left radicals have been left without any Stalinist-ruled state to idealize as an egalitarian society. Even Vietnam, that "socialist fatherland" for "Third World" enthusiasts who wanted to wish away the Sino-Soviet split, has been a "God That Failed" for many New Left leftovers. While Ho once was glorified as a gentle philosopher-poet concerned with instilling humanistic values in his people even under conditions of war and destruction, his heirs in Hanoi are today locked in a sordid nationalist war with their "comrades" in Phnom Penh, who are denounced as marauding rapists and cannibals. But "poor little Cambodia" isn't likely to become a New Left favorite. If wage differentials have been eliminated in "Democratic Kampuchea," it is only because the rabidly xenophobic and primitivist Cambodian Stalinist regime has actually abolished wages and even currency itself—which under conditions of material scarcity can only result in militarization of labor and enormous economic hardships for the toiling masses.

Thus, as a significant New Left-derived political tendency identification with "radical" Stalinist egalitarianism has had its day. But the issues which nurtured this

tendency are very much alive. Especially now, considerable attention has been generated by the new so-called "pragmatic" policies of the Hua/Teng regime. But in denouncing how the "radical" Maoists misused moral incentives and in "rehabilitating" material incentives the present Peking regime by no means has repudiated moral incentives as such. Regardless of which clique rules in the Forbidden City, the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy, as long as it remains saddled by the enormous contradiction between its material backwardness and its Great Power aspirations, must continue to resort to utopian-voluntarist methods — and to rationalize their economic policies with phony egalitarian rhetoric. It is thus timely to consider how the questions of material incentives and wage differentials have been obfuscated and distorted by Stalinist ideologues, both of the orthodox Moscow school and the sundry self-styled "radical egalitarians," ranging from Guevara to Mao.

Stalinist Idealism à la "Che"

"Che" Guevara was lionized by the New Left as the most articulate of the Cuban leaders who were growing increasingly critical of the guidance provided by the "socialist beacon" in Moscow. A series of domestic economic failures in the early 1960's convinced Guevara that Soviet-model planning principles couldn't be successfully imposed upon the plantation monoculture of Cuba. Moreover, many of the top leaders in the Cuban regime regarded the Soviet role during the Missile Crisis of 1962 as a retreat which left Cuba even more isolated than before.

In the course of the so-called "Great Debate" over economic and developmental policies which took place in Cuba during 1963-66 Guevara stressed what he called "the two pillars of socialist construction: the formation of the new human being and the development of technology." If Cuba were to achieve genuine socialism, argued Guevara, then two interrelated tasks had to be simultaneously tackled at once. First, commodity production in Cuba had to be completely eliminated through full collectivization, super-centralized planning and financing and the eradication of material incentives. Second, creating a self-sacrificing, frugal and fully-socialized "New Man" required replacing material with moral incentives and instituting campaigns encouraging unpaid voluntary labor.

While Guevara was undoubtedly fervent in his egalitarian convictions, the fundamental concepts he formulated and defended during the "Great Debate" remained fully within the ideological domain of Stalinism. At no time did Guevara question the total political disenfranchisement of the Cuban masses or the commitment of the Castro clique to the reactionary-utopian Stalinist dogma of "building socialism in one country"—in this case a tiny island only ninety miles from the shores of the foremost imperialist colossus. Guevara's political worldview was fundamentally defined by his identification with the rule of a Stalinist bureaucratic caste that views as a hostile act demands by the workers for a higher living standard or for some say in decision making. If he sounded more militant and egalitarian than the Kremlin bureaucrats (and their loyal lackeys in Cuba), it was mainly because Guevara, perhaps even more so than Fidel Castro, identified with the military—i.e., the guerrillas in power. Unlike the party and administrative apparatuses, the military

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command was that part of the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy least directly involved with implementing economic policies. Guevara was guided by a conception that "socialist" society should be built not through appealing to supposedly base material interests but by exhorting the masses to sacrifice, just as the guerrillas had only been victorious through enormous self-sacrifice and revolutionary idealism.

What defined Guevara as fundamentally an *idealist* Stalinist is the fact that he sought to surmount the insurmountable obstacles to "building socialism" in economically backward Cuba through utopian-voluntarist means. In his well-known 1965 essay, "Man and Socialism in Cuba," Guevara explicitly links the primacy of moral over material incentives to the problems of how to rapidly industrialize underdeveloped Cuba in a capitalist international environment:

"Underdevelopment and the customary flight of capital to 'civilized' countries make impossible a rapid change without sacrifices. There still remains a long stretch to be covered in the building of the economic base, and the temptation to follow the beaten paths of material interest as the lever of speedy development is very great...."

"Pursuing the chimera of achieving socialism with the aid of the blunted weapons left to us by capitalism (the commodity as the economic cell, profitability, and individual material interest as levers, etc.), it is possible to come to a blind alley.... Meanwhile, the adapted economic base has undermined the development of consciousness. To build communism, a new man must be created simultaneously with the material base."

—reproduced in Bertram Silverman, *Man and Socialism in Cuba: The Great Debate* (1971)

Thus, consciously rejecting an internationalist (i.e., Leninist-Trotskyist) perspective of revolution, Guevara advocated "sacrifices" by the laboring masses as the only viable alternative to Soviet-style technocratic methods.

It is thus quite logical that for Guevara the principal obstacle to "building socialism" in Cuba was the continuation of individualistic attitudes and values among the masses, in particular material interest as the prime motivation for labor. For example, in an interview held in 1963 Guevara declared:

"I am not interested in dry economic socialism. We are fighting against poverty, but we are also fighting against alienation. One of the fundamental objectives of Marxism is to remove interest, the factor of individual interest, and gain from men's psychological motivations. Marx was preoccupied both with economic factors and with their repercussions on the spirit. If communism isn't interested in this, too, it may be a method of distributing goods, but it will never be a revolutionary way of life."

—quoted in Silverman, introduction to *Man and Socialism in Cuba*.

While attractive to the radical iconoclasm of the early New Left, this political worldview is profoundly *anti-Marxist*. The counterposition of individual material interest to an abstract concept of social collectivity is a bourgeois ideological prejudice. In one of his earliest writings as a socialist Marx explicitly attacked setting the interests of society above the well-being of its individual members:

"Above all we must avoid postulating 'society' again as an abstraction *vis-à-vis* the individual. The individual is the *social being*. His manifestations of life—even if they may not

appear in the direct form of *communal* manifestations of life carried out in association with others—are therefore an expression and confirmation of *social life*." [emphasis in original]

—"Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works* (1975) Vol. III, p. 299

Engels was even more explicit about the individualist values of communist society. In what became the first draft of the *Communist Manifesto* he wrote:

"Question 2: What is the aim of the Communists?"

"Answer: To organise society in such a way that every member of it can develop and use all his capabilities and powers in complete freedom and without thereby infringing the basic conditions of this society."

—"Draft of a Communist Confession of Faith," in Marx and Engels, *Collected Works* (1976) Vol. VI, p. 96

Needless to say, Marxists understand that in the course of the epochal struggle to overthrow world capitalism the cadres of the revolutionary vanguard must be prepared to sacrifice their individual interests and sometimes even their lives. In a period of revolutionary crises the working masses will also make great sacrifices. But in mass struggles such sacrifices are made for the purpose of securing better material conditions in the near future. It is profoundly anti-Marxist to transform the need for the vanguard and the masses to make sacrifices in the struggle to overthrow capitalism into a doctrinal rejection of the materialist and individualist aims that are a component part of the communist worldview.

Just as Guevara counterposed individual interest to the ideal of an egalitarian-collectivist society, so he also tended to simply identify individual selfishness with bourgeois ideology. But Marxists understand that bourgeois ideology is not and never has been the cult of unbridled selfishness. Only the most vulgar bourgeois ideologists of the ilk of Ayn Rand would venture to make such a claim.

Nationalism and religion, often in concert, have played an enormous role in conditioning the laboring masses to submit to bourgeois authority in the factory and society in general. For example, Methodism was the main ideological force in the transformation of the independent English artisan class of the eighteenth century into a disciplined factory proletariat. Early nineteenth century British mill owners were very much aware of the importance of moral (i.e., religious) incentives in exploiting "their" laborers. One leading ideologue of the British industrial revolution, Andrew Ure, made the following typical observation in his 1835 work, *Philosophy of Manufactures*:

"It is, therefore, excessively the interest of every millowner to organize his moral machinery on equally sound principles with his mechanical, for otherwise he will never command the steady hands, watchful eyes, and prompt co-operation, essential to the excellence of product.... There is, in fact, no case to which the Gospel truth, 'Godliness is great gain,' is more applicable than to the administration of an extensive factory."

—quoted in E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963)

It was Guevara's Stalinist political outlook which limited him to his superficial and false view of bourgeois ideology as simply pure individualism. Guevara cannot consider nationalism as a *bourgeois* ideology precisely because of his own central ideological commitment to "socialist nation building." And Guevara's subjectivist concept of

how to liberate the "socialist man" within every Cuban citizen has a certain ideological resemblance to the Christian doctrine that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within."

Subjectivist Re-Definition of Alienation

What most attracted the New Left to Guevara's egalitarian concepts was his exhortation about ending alienated labor as a vital part of the struggle to "build socialism" in Cuba. Eliminating alienated labor would, in turn, contribute to the interrelated task of creating the new "socialist man." In "Man and Socialism in Cuba" Guevara defined unalienated labor in the following terms:

"In order for it to develop in culture, work must acquire a new condition; man as commodity ceases to exist, and a system is established that grants a quota for the fulfillment of social duty. The means of production belong to society, and the machine is only the front line where duty is performed. Man begins to free his thought from the bothersome fact that presupposed the need to satisfy his animal needs by working. He begins to see himself portrayed in his work and to understand its human magnitude through the created object, through the work carried out. This no longer involves leaving a part of his being in the form of labor power sold, which no longer belongs to him; rather it signifies an emanation from himself, a contribution to the life of society in which he is reflected, the fulfillment of his social duty."

In other words, through institutionalized measures that would encourage and reward performing "social duty" (e.g., voluntary unpaid labor) the individual Cuban worker would begin to identify his work with the larger socialist cause and, to that extent, his labor would cease to be alienated. Thus, for Guevara alienated labor is a *subjective* phenomenon, like individual interest, that can be transformed through successfully instilling new collectivist values among the working masses.

Such a concept of alienated labor, however, has nothing in common with Marxism. As understood in the Marxist sense, alienated labor is not fundamentally determined by the subjective attitude of the worker towards his work—whether he hates or likes his job, or whether he begins to get satisfaction from working to "build socialism" regardless of how he feels about his particular job. For Marxists alienated labor is not subjectively but rather *objectively and historically determined*.

Marx defined unalienated labor in the following precise terms in the *Grundrisse*:

"The labor concerned with material production can only have this [unalienated] character if (1) it is of a social nature, (2) it has a scientific character and at the same time is general work, i.e., if it ceases to be human effort as a definite, trained natural force, gives up its purely natural, primitive aspects and becomes the activity of a subject controlling all the forces of nature in the production process." [emphasis added]

Thus, for Marx alienated labor is bound up with an historically evolved division of labor in society wherein the individual workers who are involved in material production are denied mastery over the production process. This given division of labor in turn derives from the inadequate development of productivity and particularly the low cultural level of the masses. Labor ceases to be alienated only when "general work" has a thoroughly scientific character, i.e., when objective conditions enable the producer to fully control "all the forces of nature in the production process." Social production will continue to be marked by alienated labor as long as the low level of

productivity imposes a division of labor upon the individual producers.

In contrast to Guevarist idealism, Marxists understand that there are definite and manifold material preconditions which must be socially achieved before *all* producers in society are able to control "all the forces of nature in the production process." Cutting sugar cane or manning an assembly line in Stalinist-ruled Cuba can *never* be unalienated labor, no matter how socialist-minded and self-sacrificing the workers might be. Ending alienated labor for the mass of producers is possible only in a genuinely socialist society, the product of the transition period (the dictatorship of the proletariat) which has achieved a multiple increase in labor productivity, an enormous raising of the general cultural level of the population and the continual expansion of individual free time. In contrast, Guevara adopted the classically Stalinist position that falsely identifies the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, the transitional epoch between capitalism and socialism when "classes still remain and will remain" (Lenin), with *socialism*, the lower phase of communist society which presupposes "an end to all class differences and class antagonisms" (Engels). Thus, in arguing that "building socialism" in Cuba required the elimination of material incentives Guevara explicitly rejected those sections of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* which unambiguously stated that during the transitional epoch (the dictatorship of the proletariat) "bourgeois right" manifested in income differentials would continue to exist.

Idealizing the Cuban Bureaucracy

Although New Left radicals were mainly enamored of Guevara's visions of the "New Man" freed from alienated labor, the "Great Debate" in Cuba actually centered on far more pragmatic issues. Guevara linked his abstract exhortations for raising mass consciousness and ending alienated labor with a series of proposals aiming at total industrial/financial centralization in Cuba (an economic

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Prensa Latina

New Leftist volunteers from the U.S. "build socialism" by cutting sugar cane in Castro's Cuba, 1970.

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scheme that ran counter to the New Left fetish of decentralization). During the "Great Debate" Guevara advocated administering Cuba as if the country were a single extensive factory.

Underlying Guevara's ultra-centralism was his evident belief that at every level the Cuban administrative personnel would carry out their production quotas in the most cost-efficient, conscientious manner, i.e., that the Cuban bureaucracy had sufficient socialist consciousness so as not to require strict financial controls. His Soviet-model opponents, principally the veteran Moscow-line Stalinist Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, argued that unless enterprises were financially self-sufficient (i.e., expected to normally make a bookkeeping "profit"), managers would tend to squander resources. Thus, the "Great Debate" represented an intrabureaucratic tug-of-war between Guevara the idealizer of the Cuban guerrillas in power and the more "pragmatic" Stalinists around Rodríguez, who argued for a more "realistic" accommodation to managerial parasitism.

In such intrabureaucratic conflicts over planning methods revolutionary Marxists cannot take sides, since a rational and egalitarian economic policy is not possible as long as political power is monopolized by a privileged bureaucratic caste. However, among the prominent contributors to the "Great Debate" was none other than Ernest Mandel, erudite Pabloist revisionist and today prominent leader of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec). While Cuba did present the unique phenomenon of a bureaucratically deformed workers state issuing out of the victory of a non-Stalinist petty-bourgeois nationalist guerrilla formation (the July 26 Movement), Mandel & Co. claimed that "Fidel" and "Che" were genuine Marxist-Leninists and that the supposedly insignificant bureaucratic deformations which existed in the Havana regime did not require a political revolution led by a Trotskyist party but could be rectified through oh-so-comradely criticism and suggestions.

While the USec aggressively assumed the role of publicity agents for the Cuban regime under the rubric of "defending the Cuban revolution," Mandel traveled to Havana to intervene in the "Great Debate." His article, "Mercantile Categories in the Period of Transition," appeared in the January 1964 issue of *Nuestra Industria*, the journal of Guevara's Ministry of Industry. Mandel sought to become a theoretical braintruster for what he viewed as the left-leaning wing of the Cuban "leadership" around Guevara. Needless to say, in this article (as well as all his other pro-Castro accolades then and since) Mandel was mum about his "Trotskyist" affiliation and formal espousal of the program of the Fourth International; he was well aware of the fact that one of the first acts of the Castro regime was the suppression of the ostensibly Trotskyist movement in Cuba (the Posadista organization), which included the destruction of the printing plates for a Spanish translation of Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution*.

Disingenuously presenting himself as merely an academic fellow traveler of world Stalinism commenting on the problems faced by the "workers states" in the

transition to "socialism," Mandel in this article throws his support behind Guevara in the issues in dispute. On the question of enterprise autonomy, for instance, Mandel backs Guevara's supercentralism:

"The more underdeveloped a country's economy, the fewer able, experienced, and truly socialist technical cadres it will have, and the wiser it is, in our opinion, to reserve decision-making power over the more important investments and financial matters to the central authorities."

—reproduced in Silverman, *Man and Socialism in Cuba*

Having thus given the Cuban Stalinist "central authorities" a *carte blanche*, Mandel must take political responsibility for the disastrous results of Castro's economic policies. What? Guevara's super-"centralist" schemes actually involved was the dismantling of the system of charges between state-owned enterprises and between enterprises and the ministries as the means of financial control and accountability. Thus, the Cuban economic system was stripped of any mechanism for determining rational resource allocation and utilization. In 1966 Castro drastically reduced the power and functions of the Central Planning Board and personally assumed decision-making formerly handled by the planners. Completely neglecting the gathering of statistical data, Castro discarded the medium-range plan, launching in its place a series of unrelated "mini" and "special" plans. As a result capital and human resources were grossly misused and squandered.

Years later, after Castro returned to orthodox Soviet-model planning systems, the Guevarist schemes were criticized as idealist. At the first-ever congress of the Cuban Communist Party held in 1976 Castro made the following very dry criticism of Guevara's policies:

"The fact is that a single management system of the entire economy did not exist and, under the circumstances, we took the less correct decision—to invent a new procedure...."

"By the end of 1965, the Ministry of Finance had already been dissolved and the National Bank restructured. The last budget adopted was that of 1967, but its implementation was not controlled because, since the second quarter of that year, charges and payments were no longer being made...."

"In 1968, the connection between salaries and output sales was severed. Work-hour schedules on the basis of consciousness and renunciation of pay for extra hours worked were stimulated. In 1967 interest on loans and taxes collected from farmers was abolished...."

"When it might have seemed as though we were drawing nearer to communist forms of production and distribution, we were actually pulling away from the correct methods for the previous construction of socialism."

—Granma, 4 July 1976

While his philosophical contributions were definitively idealist and his economic schemes proved disastrous, Guevara at the same time was a rare figure in the history of world Stalinism inasmuch as he evidently believed in the egalitarian principles that he articulated. Guevara was manifestly a man of considerable political integrity and personal courage who lived and was prepared to die for his beliefs. It has been claimed—and it may indeed be true—that Guevara left Cuba to undertake guerrilla war in Latin America at least in part because he was repelled by the small-mindedness, philistinism and venality of the new bureaucratic caste under Castro.

Maoist Mystification of Bourgeois Right

While ideologically an inveterate Stalinist to the end, Guevara was different in this respect from the Chinese

"radical egalitarians" who rose to power and prominence during the Cultural Revolution. In contrast to Guevara, the Maoist sycophants, like their mentor, were totally cynical and demagogic in their professions of egalitarian policies. Mao was a bonapartist maneuverer whose endlessly quoted, quasi-delphic utterances could be (and have been) used to justify the most contradictory and even counterposed policies. For her part Chiang Ching preached puritanism and austerity to the Chinese masses, while enjoying to the full a luxuriant lifestyle that would be fitting for a Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis or a Princess Grace of Monaco. From all evidence the Maoist "radicals" were exceptionally corrupt and vicious cliquists, even by the Byzantine standards of the Forbidden City.

All the "radical" Maoist rhetoric about "restricting bourgeois right" and "putting politics in command" that captured the imagination of the New Left was nothing more than demagogy which the Chinese leaders cynically used to rationalize what in reality were intrabureaucratic and internecine dogfights. It all originated with the rupture between the USSR and China in 1960, when the Chinese Stalinist leadership felt compelled to concoct an incredibly idealist and vulgar "theory" to explain how "socialist" Russia had suddenly become "revisionist." According to

Mao and his then "comrade-in-arms" Liu Shao-chi (the head of state and number two man in the party hierarchy), under "socialism" a "two-line struggle" continues between the genuine revolutionaries and the "revisionists" whose policies, if implemented, would lead inevitably to the restoration of capitalism. Thus, with the passing of Stalin, the "revisionist" Khrushchev seized power in a palace coup and proceeded over the next several years to open the floodgates to all the crypto-"capitalist readers" who had been secretly harboring restorationist ideas but were afraid to come out into the open. Needless to say, this "theory" neglected to explain why Mao only got Khrushchev's number after the Sino-Soviet rupture.

It was during the Cultural Revolution, however, that this fairy tale was elaborated into the doctrine of "capitalist roadism." Whereas Stalin claimed that all his real or potential enemies in the bureaucracy were agents of Wall Street or Hitler, Mao "deepened" this method, accusing his rivals within the Chinese bureaucracy of having *bourgeois ideas*, i.e. of being "capitalist readers." In a bid to restore his authority that had been damaged after the fiasco of the "Great Leap Forward" Mao launched the Cultural Revolution by branding Liu Shao-chi "China's Khrushchev" and calling for the purge of his followers who were allegedly leading China down the "capitalist road."

Maoist rhetoric about "restricting bourgeois right" derived from the need to explain just how the economic policies pursued by Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping and Peng Chen—restoration of private peasant plots and return to a free market in agricultural produce, both designed to regain the peasants' confidence that had been lost through the "Great Leap" disaster—could lead to the restoration of capitalism. Thus, Mao and his "closest-comrade-in-arms" Marshal Lin Biao charged Liu and Teng with advocating the primacy of material incentives and forgetting about the "class struggle." By "putting production in command" Liu and Teng were said to have been conspiring to put a new bourgeoisie in power.

That such charges were sheer demagogy was revealed most starkly when Lin Biao, named in the Chinese constitution as Mao's heir designate, fell out of favor in the Forbidden City in 1971. After Lin's plane reportedly fell out of the sky over Mongolia the deceased former "closest-comrade-in-arms" of the Chairman was denounced as "a fanatical advocate of 'material incentives.'" On the contrary, Lin in fact had been a champion of Maoist voluntarism. During the Lin Biao period (1969-71) Chinese economic policies resembled those of the "Great Leap," although not on the same scale. Private peasant plots were curtailed and labor was mobilized not through use of material incentives but through direct state coercion.

The major Maoist tract branding support for material incentives as "capitalist roadism" is the article, "On the Social Basis of the Lin Biao Anti-Party Clique," penned by Yao Wen-yuan, Mao's principal literary hatchet man (until he got axed after the death of the Chairman). Here is the nub of his argument:

"If we do not follow this course [restricting bourgeois right], but call instead for the consolidation, extension and strengthening of bourgeois right and that part of inequality it entails, the inevitable result will be polarization, i.e., a small number of people will in the course of distribution acquire increasing amounts of commodities and money through

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Der Spiegel

Big-Character poster vilifies "Gang of Four" as two-faced "capitalist readers" bent on spreading anarchy and economic chaos.

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certain legal channels and numerous illegal ones; capitalist ideas of amassing fortunes and craving for personal fame and gain, stimulated by such 'material incentives,' will spread unchecked; such phenomena as turning public property into private property, speculation, graft and corruption, theft and bribery will rise; the capitalist principle of the exchange of commodities will make its way into political life and even into Party life, undermine the socialist planned economy and give rise to such acts of capitalist exploitation as the conversion of commodities and money into capital and labor power into a commodity; and there will be a change in the nature of the system of ownership in certain departments and units which follow the revisionist line; and instances of oppression and exploitation of the labouring people will once again occur."

— *Peking Review*, 7 March 1975

What Yao does here is a causal sleight-of-hand. For Marx and Lenin "bourgeois right" had a precise and delimited meaning in terms of the transitional epoch. It signified the continuation of differences in wages and income during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But under the rubric of "bourgeois right" Yao identifies widening wage differentials with the illicit accumulation of capital, arguing that the first necessarily and inexorably leads to the second. This is a specious argument.

In a non-capitalist state such as the USSR or People's Republic of China wage differentials result in different levels of *individual consumption*, but not in personal accumulation of the means of production. Even the often extravagant incomes (legal and otherwise) received by the Stalinist bigwigs are expended mainly on high living (e.g., Brezhnev's collection of foreign cars, Chiang Ching's collection of foreign films). To be sure, in the USSR and China instances occur when state administrators are caught selling state property on the black market. But such cases of individual officials going into business for themselves are a marginal economic phenomenon (even in Yugoslavia, where "market socialism" is most extensive); stiff penalties (including capital punishment) serve to discourage such "capitalist roadism."

Contrary to the scenario given by Yao, quantitative changes in income distribution, important as they might be in many ways, cannot affect the class character of the state as long as the main means of production remain nationalized. It would take a counterrevolution that *smashed the state apparatus* and subsequently converted the collectivized property back into privately owned commodities to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union, China or any of the other deformed workers states. Such a fundamental overturn in property relations could not be produced simply through the molecular economic processes precipitated by widening income differentials.

However, what Yao and Mao were really concerned about was not bureaucratic parasitism but workers' demands for higher wages. Wages had remained frozen in China since 1962, even though the 1956 wage code stipulated that general raises were to be implemented every other year. In his article Yao attributed all demands for higher wages to the nefarious influence of Lin Piao:

"A principal member of the Lin Piao anti-Party clique also wrote that 'the principle of to each according to his work and of material benefit' was the 'decisive motive force' in

promoting production. On the face of it, they advocated using money to 'stimulate' the workers, but actually they wanted to widen without limit the differences in grade among the workers in order to foster and buy over a small section of the working class, turn it into a privileged stratum which betrays the proletarian dictatorship and the interests of the proletariat, and split the unity of the working class.... Lin Piao and company attached 'particular importance' to using 'wages' to lure 'young workers,' and their 'inducements'—official post, emolument, favour—were a sinister scheme. This shows us by negative example that young workers, particularly those who have become cadres, must consciously reject the material inducements of the bourgeoisie and the flattery offered them in various forms by the idea of bourgeois right."



Thus, while claiming to stand for the "unity of the working class," Yao actually sought to justify the suppression of all wage demands by the Chinese workers.

A few months after Yao wrote this article the Maoist regime demonstrated in practice its hostility to legitimate wage demands by the workers. In the summer of 1975 a citywide strike erupted in the major textile-producing center of Hangchow, near Shanghai. At first the regime sent Wang Hung-wen, one of Yao's "radical" cronies and later one of the hapless "Gang," to Hangchow to try to talk the strikers back to work. When this failed, Teng Hsiao-ping personally led a 10,000-strong PLA force into Hangchow and smashed the strike. When confronted by the long-denied economic demands and struggles of the Chinese workers, all wings of the bureaucracy, from the phony "egalitarians" to the "rehabilitated revisionists," proved to be united in their commitment to preserving their complete political stranglehold over the atomized proletariat.

Unlike New Left radicals, the Chinese working class was far from satisfied with a steady diet of egalitarian rhetoric. If anything, the Cultural Revolution left the mass of Chinese workers in an even worse economic situation than before. In the name of combatting "capitalist roadism" the Maoist regime has kept wages frozen; in 1973 the Chiang Ching clique evidently put a stop to a move to advance workers in the bottom five wage grades one rung higher. Under this system the first grade provides a wage of 30 yuan a month and the top grade 100 yuan a month, a wage ratio comparable to that in the USSR (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 27 January 1978).

However, the fundamentally inequalitarian nature of income distribution in Mao's China is revealed not so much

Frank Tam/Reviewchart

CHINA'S THREE WAGE SCALES												
	GRADE	RMB PER MONTH										
		0	20	40	60	80	100	200	300	400	500	RMB
TECHNICAL 	1	340 (Highest)										
	13	46 (Lowest)										
ADMINISTRATIVE 	1	450 (Highest)										
	23	30 (Lowest)										
WORKER 	1	30 (Lowest)										
	3	100 (Highest)										

by wage differences among the workers as by the income differentials between the working class and the administrative/technical elite. In the wage system copied from the USSR by Mao in 1956 (and retained to this day) the highest technical grade receives 340 yuan a month and the top administrative grade 450 yuan a month. In Canton in 1974 the lowest grade clerical worker received only 35 yuan a month while the head of his or her bureau received an official salary of between 200 and 210 yuan a month—a ratio of about six-to-one (*Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, No. 4, 1976).

Furthermore, the material privileges which the Chinese administrative elite enjoys also include various “fringe benefits.” For manual workers sick leave up to one month is given with a ten percent reduction in pay; for longer periods pay is docked at a rate up to 50 percent. But administrators are granted up to three months sick leave with no loss in pay, while longer absences are given with only a 10-30 percent reduction in pay (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 January 1978). And these are only the official wage and benefit scales. Since the Chinese proletariat has no institutionalized control over the government apparatus, Chinese enterprise managers, heads of bureaus, military commanders and a whole host of other well-placed bureaucrats can supplement their official incomes by all kinds of petty corruption and parasitism, for example using state vehicles for personal errands. Such inequalitarian wage scales and bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement are inevitable as long as the governmental administration is not responsible to the democratic organizations of the working class, i.e., until genuine soviet democracy is established through a proletarian political revolution that topples the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy.

“Great Disorder Under Heaven...”?

To rationalize the proposed re-introduction of material incentives the new Hua/Teng leadership has made much ado about the supposed breakdown in labor discipline in China's factories. This situation, like every other evil (real or fabricated) that has befallen China, has been attributed to the misdeeds of the nefarious “Gang of Four,” who allegedly were out to wreck the economy. Typical of the tirades against the voluntarist idiocies supposedly promoted by the “Gang” is the article, “The ‘Gang of Four’ Pushed Anarchism,” which reads in part:

“The ‘gang of four’ was not just opposing ‘*kuan, chia, ya*’ [controlling anarchist tendencies, curbing capitalist tendencies, suppressing the class enemies’ sabotage] but was opposing all rules and regulations. Chang Chun-chiao made this clear when he said: ‘It is necessary to set up enterprises that have no rules and regulations’... How can production go on in a large enterprise without rules and regulations? This is common knowledge. Was the ‘gang of four’ really ignorant of this? Of course not. In spreading such nonsense as they did, they aimed at throwing the national economy into chaos so that they could blame others for it and seize power by taking advantage of the ensuing chaotic state of affairs.”

—*Peking Review*, 1 April 1977

The Western bourgeois press has generally bought the official Peking line that labor morale and discipline in China has gone to the dogs as a result of the policies of the “Gang.” For example, the *Washington Post* of 15 May 1977 ran an article entitled “Post-Mao Leaders Battle ‘WPA Atmosphere’ in Factories.” Similarly, one of the

editors of the prestigious London *Economist* who recently returned from a tour in China described a typical Chinese factory in the following terms:

“Half the work force was not there at all, being better occupied in the town burying the winter cabbages dumped in already frost-nipped piles along the city’s pavements. The other half was gently ambling on with its job, English-style, but was not adverse to stopping for a cigarette and a pee at the inscrutable occidentals come to visit them. Work discipline everywhere in our industrial plants was, to put it kindly, relaxed...”

—*Economist*, 31 December 1977

A widespread and serious deterioration in labor discipline is always a sign of political disaffection with, if not opposition to, the state authorities. After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, for example, the normally industrious Prague factory workers began to take very long coffee and lunch breaks, and productivity plummeted as a result. It is certainly possible that in China industrial workers have responded to the years of frozen wages and feverish “ideological campaigns” that consumed much of what little free time they had by deliberately slacking off on their productivity. Over the past several years at least, China has been plagued by labor unrest; so volatile and violent have been the reported strikes and protests since the death of Mao and the purge of the “Gang of Four” that the army had to be sent to occupy several provinces.

However, the accounts of the Hua regime and bourgeois “China watchers” about how lackadaisical Chinese workers have become cannot be taken at face value. It is important to keep in mind that in their campaign to vilify the “Gang of Four” the present Chinese rulers have a real interest in exaggerating all the “crimes” supposedly committed by the purged four. Moreover, Peking is no doubt exaggerating the problem of labor discipline in order to justify the proposed widening of pay differentials and restoration of piece rates and bonuses—anti-egalitarian measures that are sure to be unpopular with the Chinese workers. For their part bourgeois journalists, who have no interest in seeing labor productivity increased in China, are predisposed to accepting the contention that the Maoist “radicals” destroyed labor discipline, since they seek to discredit the very idea that socialist consciousness can ever be a positive factor in production.

It isn’t now possible to ascertain the true state of labor morale presently prevailing in China’s factories. Even if the official reports of high absenteeism and low labor productivity were accurate, these examples are selected for a tendentious purpose. It is also necessary to bear in mind that in order to minimize unemployment, factories in China (like those in the USSR) are kept *overmanned* by capitalist standards. Thus, the impressionistic comparisons with West European or Japanese enterprises which are frequently made by foreigners who visit China are not very meaningful.

In any case, changes in labor productivity on a national scale are very difficult to measure. Even more so than the Soviet Union, China is a closed society in which the detailed, comprehensive statistics required to compute labor productivity are not public information and may not even exist at all. However, one can derive a rough indirect index of labor productivity from statistics about industrial

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Egalitarianism...

output. On the basis of statistics compiled by the Peking regime the well-respected *Far Eastern Economic Review* calculated that between 1969 (the end of the Cultural Revolution) and 1973 industrial output in China increased by 58 percent (*Asia Yearbook*, 1975). Such a significant increase in output does not jibe with the scenarios of widespread anarchy in factories across China that have been promoted by the regime.

Differential Wages During the Transitional Epoch

In their writings on moral versus material incentives and "restricting bourgeois right" both the ideological spokesmen of the current so-called "pragmatic" regime in Peking and the "radical" Maoists confuse, in large part deliberately, three separate questions.

One is the question of wage differentials as a mechanism for allocating labor between different occupations, industries and geographical regions. A second and related question is differential wage payments—piece rates and bonuses—as a means of securing labor discipline and morale. And the third is the relation between the incomes of the administrative hierarchy and those of the mass of the workers.

Stalinist "egalitarians" like Guevara and Yao attempt to simply identify differential wages with capitalist market relations. All their talk about "restricting bourgeois right" and "moral not material incentives" is a demagogic cover for *state coercion* in the allocation of labor. It is an elementary proposition of Marxism—explicitly stated in such key works as Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Engel's *Anti-Dühring* and Lenin's *State and Revolution*—that during the transitional epoch (the dictatorship of the proletariat) differential wages will continue to exist. Income differentials continue to be needed to allocate labor between different occupations, industries and regions without having to resort to administrative coercion. Given that material scarcity and cultural attitudes inherited from bourgeois society do not immediately disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat, many workers will not take the time and effort required to acquire new skills without receiving a higher income for doing so. Similarly, many workers will not take particularly dangerous, arduous or unpleasant jobs without receiving significantly higher than average wages.

In addition to such material incentives, a workers state would also have recourse to moral incentives during the transition period. A revolutionary regime, elected on the

basis of workers councils (soviets), would have the moral authority to reduce in general wage differentials. For example, many urban youth could be induced to take jobs in remote or backward rural areas on the basis of socialist idealism rather than higher wages. In a workers state the optimum wage structure, including the best mix of material and moral incentives, would be determined through the institutionalized mechanisms of workers democracy, in particular, negotiations between the central labor ministry and the trade unions.

In contrast to this socialist norm, in China, despite all the "radical" Maoist demagogy about "restricting bourgeois right," industrial workers *cannot change jobs* without official approval—a degree of state coercion in the allocation of labor that is reactionary even by the norms of capitalism. Likewise, in the period since the Red Guards were smashed in 1968 millions of urban youth in China have been dispersed throughout the countryside to perform



Der Spiegel

Commune in Kwangsi province: Maoist utopian voluntarism is rooted in the contradiction between the great material backwardness of the country and the Great Power ambitions of its ruling bureaucratic caste.

back-breaking agricultural labor. Exhorted by the regime to "learn from the peasantry," these youth went to the countryside not on the basis of Maoist "moral incentives" but as a result of (or under the threat of) state coercion, which for the Red Guards who resisted the liquidation of what they mistakenly believed were the egalitarian goals of the Cultural Revolution meant brutal military force.

If the smashing of the disillusioned Red Guards and the subsequent suppression of proposed wage increases for the Chinese workers are considered victories in "restricting bourgeois right," then pro-"Gang" Maoists like the Avakianite RCP should love the methods of so-called "socialist construction" imposed by the Pol Pot regime in "Democratic Kampuchea." Why, the Maoist "mass campaigns" to exorcise the evil Confucian spirit that was embodied in Lin Piao pale in comparison with how the ruling clique in Phnom Penh (whoever they are) cleaned

out "bourgeois right" in Cambodia.

After consolidating power in the spring of 1975 the Cambodian Stalinists emptied the capital city of Phnom Penh at gunpoint (other cities and towns were depopulated in a similar fashion as they fell to the Khmer Rouge). The urban population—not just the war refugees but long-time city dwellers, including the elderly and sick—were force-marched into the countryside, where they were put to work in rice production regardless of their previous occupation. According to several Yugoslav journalists who toured Cambodia last March (the first foreigners allowed to do so since the Khmer Rouge came to power three years ago), Cambodian workers are not permitted to leave their assigned farming commune or even their production team, and youths by the thousands have been impressed into so-called "voluntary" mobile labor brigades (*New York Times*, 24 March 1978).

Rather than using material incentives for particularly back-breaking and noxious work the Cambodian regime resorts to extensive child labor. In a recent very revealing statement Cambodian President Khieu Samphan declared: "Our children do not need toys which were formerly imported at considerable cost. They are happy with driving sparrows away from the crops, tending cattle and buffalo, collecting natural fertilizer and helping to build dams and digging ditches."

—quoted in *London Times*, 7 February 1978

As for the second question—differential wage payments to impose labor discipline—Stalinist "pragmatists" like Hua and Teng attempt to identify differential wages as a means to allocate labor with differential wage payments as a means of securing labor discipline and goading the workers into greater productivity. Communists have a fundamentally different attitude toward piece rates and bonuses than toward occupational or sectoral wage differences. Piece rate wages and bonuses for productivity pit one worker against another and consequently have always been fought by the labor movement under capitalism. As Trotsky remarked about the retrogressive character of the Russian Stakhanovite movement launched in 1935, "Relations of this kind are farther from socialist morals than the relations of the workers of a capitalist factory, joined together as they are in a struggle against exploitation" (*Revolution Betrayed*).

Stalinist "pragmatists" like Teng seek to justify their anti-egalitarian economic policies by pointing out that Lenin regarded piece rates as legitimate. It is true that during the catastrophic economic collapse which accompanied the horribly destructive civil war in Russia, at a time when most of the class-conscious workers had been mobilized to the military fronts and their places in the factories were taken by raw peasants drawn from the backward countryside, Lenin advocated the introduction of piece rates as a capitalist production technique which, while odious, nevertheless was superior to the primitive methods of "War Communism." However, with the civil war behind, the Soviet Labor Code of 1922 provided for wages to be negotiated between the trade unions and the enterprise management. By 1928 piece rates covered only 34 percent of the industrial labor force (Margaret Dewar, *Labour Policy in the USSR, 1917-1928*). It was during Stalin's break-neck forced industrialization drive of the 1930's that piece rates were made nearly universal in the USSR and with differentials far steeper than ever before.

Stakhanovism served to enormously widen income differences within the Russian proletariat, crystallizing a labor "aristocracy" that was despised by the mass of the workers.

In a workers state socialist consciousness, integrally bound up with soviet democracy, would act to ensure that work is performed conscientiously. To be sure, even in a healthy workers state there will be some loiterers and shirkers. But such errant individuals who are willfully negligent can best be dealt with through the organized social pressure of their fellow workers; the few incorrigibly ill-disciplined workers could be economically penalized and, perhaps as a last resort, fired.

If the Stalinist "egalitarians" and "pragmatists" each manipulate for their own purposes the separate but related questions of wage differentials among the workers, they are united in their common attempt to obfuscate the question of income differences between the mass of workers and the administrative hierarchy. All Stalinist ideologues discuss the question of incentives in terms of the population in general, making no distinction between the mass of workers and the so-called "socialist intelligentsia" (the bureaucrats). Orthodox Stalinist ideologues in the service of Teng and Hua use the general principle, "From each according to his work," to rationalize the relatively extravagant incomes and "fringe benefits" enjoyed by the administrative elite. Contrariwise, the Stalinist "egalitarians" like Guevara and Yao seek to divert attention from the bureaucracy's material privileges by belaboring the lack of full socialist consciousness among the masses.

Neither the Stalinist "egalitarians" nor the "pragmatists" have ever advocated the genuinely egalitarian principle that, as a norm, the income of a socialist administrator should not exceed the income of an average skilled worker. In his seminal work *State and Revolution* Lenin presents this as one of the basic economic principles of the transitional society:

"To organize the whole economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as all officials, shall receive salaries no higher than 'a workman's wage,' all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat—this is our immediate aim." [emphasis in original]

Of course, such a programmatic norm is not always immediately realizable. If a workers state remains isolated and backward (as was the USSR in Lenin's time), then bourgeois experts can be expected to try to flee to the advanced capitalist countries, and all the more so if their salaries were to be cut to correspond to the earnings of a skilled manual worker. Thus in the USSR under Lenin and Trotsky bourgeois specialists desperately needed by the beleaguered regime, including foreigners, were paid

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Egalitarianism...

relatively high salaries. But for Lenin and Trotsky such income differentials were an unfortunate necessity, dictated by the delay of the revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. Furthermore, at that time bourgeois specialists in the employ of the Bolsheviks were not given posts as responsible administrators but instead only had advisory and purely technical roles.

In a workers state during the transitional epoch income differentials between the mass of workers and the technical specialists will persist for a period as a result of the lack of uniform socialist consciousness conditioned by the continuation of conditions of material scarcity. However, in a workers state the responsible central administrative hierarchy would be selected precisely on the basis of *demonstrated socialist consciousness*; i.e., from among those who offer their services to the regime out of demonstrably unselfish motives. Thus, in a workers state the income of a factory manager or head of an industrial ministry would not be determined in the same way as the salary of a coal miner or a doctor working in a remote rural area, i.e. by the labor market.

Material incentives as a means to keep the administrative personnel honest would be regarded as fundamentally inappropriate in a workers state. Managers or other specialists who are corrupt, incorrigibly negligent or abusive would simply be removed from positions of responsibility. In the institutional context of soviet democracy the most effective mechanism for keeping socialist administrators honest is workers control: the authoritative consultative voice of workers at the point of production. It is the workers under a particular administrator who are best able to ensure that his work is performed conscientiously.

In contrast, in the Sino-Soviet degenerated/deformed workers states the economic parasitism of the administra-

tors has become institutionalized. Bureaucratic parasitism has been at the heart of the seemingly interminable debates over economic and financial decentralization, from the "Great Debate" in Cuba to the rigidly controlled discussion of "Liberianism" in the USSR.

But the continual shifts in the level of centralization in the collectivized economies of the degenerated/deformed workers states can never solve the problem of managerial corruption and parasitism. Rational economic planning and administration are fundamentally incompatible with the monopolization of political power by a bureaucratic caste. Soviet attempts to curb managerial parasitism and inefficiency provide the most graphic case in point.

With the institution of the first Five Year Plan in 1928 managerial incomes were geared to over-fulfilling the planned output. However, this single, crude index left a lot of room for cheating on the part of the administrative authorities. Thus, Soviet managers routinely understated the real productive capacity of their plants so as to be given a plan that could be easily fulfilled (and hopefully over-fulfilled), while hoarding labor and raw materials and willfully sacrificing assortment and quality so as to maximize output. In 1965 the Brezhnev/Kosygin regime instituted an economic reform that was motivated by the "principle": if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. A complex system was instituted in the USSR which directly linked managerial incomes to enterprise "profitability." But instead of eliminating the bureaucratic evils of the old system, the "Liberian" reforms simply perpetuated them, while generating others. (For a detailed analysis of the 1965 Soviet economic reforms see: "How Maoists 'Restore Capitalism' in the Soviet Union," in the Spartacus Youth League pamphlet *Why the USSR Is Not Capitalist*.)

A revolutionary workers government would be able to suppress administrative parasitism as a significant economic phenomenon. It thus would be able to eliminate those forms of financial decentralization now employed in the Soviet bloc in a vain attempt to counter managerial



Der Spiegel

Steel mill in Anshan: producing 23 million tons of steel, as much as England. Official claim that labor discipline collapsed under "Gang of Four" files in the face of rise in China's industrial output.

corruption and inefficiency. In a non-capitalist state centralized economic planning takes on an unequivocally socialist character only when the governing authorities represent the rational, democratically determined interests of the working people. Under a Stalinist regime greater economic centralization does not necessarily possess any such socialist virtues and may be largely formal. As demonstrated by Mao's "Great Leap" debacle and Castro's 10 million ton sugar harvest fiasco, the megalomania of the Stalinist rulers can be far more economically disruptive and wasteful than increased competition between state enterprises.

Not much remains of the aura of radical egalitarianism surrounding the "Third World" Stalinist regimes. It has been getting increasingly difficult for the New Left apologists for the Chinese and Cuban regimes to claim that these societies are somehow profoundly egalitarian. When Castro's Cuba and Mao's China have experimented with

making a leap out of commodity production, the result has been increased state coercion of labor and rationing for the masses—followed by costly fiascos which fall hardest on the shoulders of the workers and peasants. In this respect the truly brutal primitivism of Pol Pot's "Democratic Kampuchea" is simply the most extreme expression of Stalinist economic "egalitarianism."

Genuine economic egalitarianism is not possible as long as political power is monopolized by a Stalinist ruling oligarchy. The genuinely egalitarian use of moral incentives requires a government with the moral authority derived from the democratic participation of the working masses expressed through soviet institutions. Wage labor and the commodity nature of consumer goods will be overcome through the appropriation of the economic wealth of the advanced capitalist world—the fruit of the transitional period inaugurated by the victory of the international proletarian revolution. ■

Statement of the Trotskyist Faction

With the following statement, members of the Trotskyist Faction of the British Workers Socialist League (WSL) resigned from the WSL at its February 18-19 Conference. The Trotskyist Faction's programmatic statements on Ireland, Turkey and the general document "In Defence of a Revolutionary Programme" had indicated a large measure of agreement with the Trotskyist politics of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt). After several weeks of intensive political discussions, the Trotskyist Faction fused with the London Spartacist Group of the iSt to form a new sympathizing section of the iSt, the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B).

This fusion represented a major confirmation of the iSt's policy of revolutionary regroupment and enabled the SL/B to launch a regular newspaper, Spartacist Britain, which reprinted the major documents of the ex-Trotskyist Faction in its first issue.

The debate at this conference has exposed in the clearest light the majority's hostility to the highest task of Marxists today: the construction of an international cadre hardened in the fight for a communist programme.

The counterposition of the Bolshevik position of the Trotskyist Faction to the hardened right centrism of the central leadership has brought forth another shameless defence of the majority's Pabliste attachment to the Labour Party, their capitulationist attitude to nationalism, and in particular Irish nationalism, their all-pervading economism and minimalism and their parochialism.

It is apparent that the fight for the re-creation of the

Fourth International can only take place in implacable *opposition* to this parody of Trotskyism. Recognising the fundamental divergence between our faction and all other tendencies within the Workers' Socialist League that has been confirmed this weekend we resign from the WSL.

We intend to immediately open discussions with the international Spartacist tendency, with the aim of moving toward a fused organisation. Forward to the British section of the reformed Fourth International!

Signers:

1. Eunice Aktar, WSL 1978, Liverpool Branch.
2. Richard Brookes, I.S. 1973-75, WSL 1975-78, Oxford General Branch.
3. Carolyn Dixon, WSL 1977-78, Birmingham Branch.
4. E., WSL 1976-78, London Area Committee, Turkish Group, Hackney Branch.
5. F., WSL 1976-78, Turkish Group, Hackney Branch.
6. Alastair Green, I.S. 1973-74; Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); RCG 1975; founder member WSL, 1975-78, West Midlands Area Committee, Birmingham Branch chairman, convenor student fraction, editorial board *Socialist Press*.
7. Clive Hills, WRP 1973-76, editorial board *Keep Left* (paper of the Young Socialists, youth group of the WRP); WSL 1976-78, Oxford Student/Trent Branch.
8. Alan Holford, I.S. 1971-73 (expelled); Revolutionary Opposition (ex-I.S.) 1972-74; founder member RCG 1974-75, Political Committee; founder member WSL 1975-78, National Committee, West Midlands Area chairman, Birmingham Branch secretary, convenor of Women's Commission.
9. Dewi Jones, WSL 1976-78, Liverpool Branch.
10. Mark Kinker, WSL 1977-78.
11. Leena, Maoist organisations (Asia) 1972-74; WSL 1977-78.
12. Paul Lannigan, SLL 1968-72, Derry Branch, Northern Ireland, Irish National Committee (1968-70), full-time

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Trotskyist Faction Statement...

organiser Liverpool SLL/YS (1970-72); WSL 1977-78, Irish Commission, West London Branch.

13. Cath McMillan, WSL 1977-78, Coventry Branch.
14. Joe Quigley, Communist Party of Great Britain, 1969-70; I.S. 1970-74 (expelled); Left Faction, Left Opposition (both of I.S.); RCG 1975; founder member WSL 1975-78, National Committee, North West Area secretary, Manchester Branch secretary, Irish Commission.
15. Jim Saunders, I.S. 1974-76; WSL 1976-78, London Area Committee, West London Branch secretary, Irish Commission, editorial board *Socialist Press*, Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, organising committee.
16. Mike Shortland, Young Communist League 1970-73; IMG 1975-76; WSL 1977-78, London Area Committee.
17. Robert Styles, WSL 1976-78.
18. Caroline Walton, WSL 1977-78, Central London Branch.
19. Jo Woodward, I.S. 1972-74 (expelled); Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); WSL 1976-78, Coventry Branch.
20. Tim Woodward, I.S. 1972-74 (expelled); Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); WSL 1976-78, West Midlands Area Committee.

Coventry Branch chairman, convenor NALGO union fraction.

21. John Zucker, WSL 1976-78, Birmingham Branch.

Another comrade, not a member of the Trotskyist Faction, resigned together with the faction and submitted the appended statement:

Although not a member of the Trotskyist Faction, and with some reservations, I supported their main perspectives document, and I stand by that. The discussion and voting at this conference have confirmed for me that the WSL is not to be budged from what I regard as its fundamentally wrong positions, and I therefore also resign.

Signed:

T., WRP 1974-75, expelled as part of the Thornett opposition; WSL 1975-78, editorial board *Socialist Press*, London Area Committee.

WSL: Workers Socialist League
 WRP: Workers Revolutionary Party,
 formerly the SLL: Socialist Labour League
 YS: Young Socialists, youth group of the WRP
 RCG: Revolutionary Communist Group
 I.S.: International Socialists,
 now the SWP: Socialist Workers Party



The founding conference of the Spartacist League/Britain.

Workers Vanguard

Mandel...

(continued from page 5)
slandering their own comrades and refusing to publicize their persecution and even assassination—Pablo & Co. also instructed Peng not to give information concerning this witchhunt to a group of Vietnamese Trotskyists who were returning to their country to enter the party of Ho Chi Minh. Yet Ho was himself responsible for the assassination of Vietnamese Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau and scores of Fourth Internationalists who led the August 1945 uprising against the reimposition of



Quatrième Internationale

Ta Thu Thau

Western colonial rule! The group of Vietnamese emigrés returned innocent of any knowledge of the Stalinist repression being carried out in China—which would no doubt have dampened their enthusiasm for Pablo's tactic of "deep entrism"—and were never heard from again.

Peng wrote in his letter that he had considered Mandel/Germán "one of the most promising new leaders of our movement," although "I had also noticed his lack of penetrating analysis in observing various problems, his impressionist temperament, wavering and conciliationist spirit manifested very often on important problems, and his facility in modifying his own positions." It was the latter characteristics—impressionism and cowardice—which drove Mandel into the arms of Pablo and ruined him as a revolutionary leader. But this was more than a personal tragedy. It was a major factor in allowing Pablo to tighten his bureaucratic grip on the FI apparatus and ultimately to destroy it. Mandel's craven political capitulation facilitated the victory of Pabloist revisionism over the weak, disoriented Fourth International—the political destruction of the world revolutionary instrument founded by Trotsky. And it directly sabotaged the urgently needed defense of the Chinese Trotskyists, who to this day remain in Mao's jails (if they have not already died in prison).

Because of his personal weaknesses, Mandel became not only a revisionist but a traitor to the Trotskyist movement.

Not only did the revisionist program of Pabloism mean liquidation of the struggle to construct a Trotskyist vanguard, it was soon expressed externally as well in a series of political capitulations to Stalinism. When on 17 June 1953 the working class of East Berlin rose up against their bureaucratic rulers—in the first instance against the Russian army of occupation—the shock waves spread throughout Europe. Playwright Bertold Brecht, a long-time Communist Party member, penned an epigraph of bitter irony and resignation: according to the authorities, "the people had lost the confidence of the government and could only win it back through redoubled effort. Wouldn't it be easier if the government dissolved the people and elected another." What was the response of Pablo's International Secretariat to this event, the first abortive attempt at political revolution in the Soviet bloc? It issued a

manifesto calling for "real democratization of the Communist parties"—i.e. bureaucratic self-reform—and failed, deliberately, to call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops (*Quatrième Internationale*, July 1953).

Three years later Pablo/Mandel & Co. repeated this capitulation to the Kremlin, this time by turning their backs on the Hungarian workers who rose up against the hated secret police and the Russian army. Contrasting this attempt at proletarian anti-bureaucratic revolution unfavorably to Poland, these fraudulent "Trotskyists" wrote that the absence of a political leadership "provoked exactly those flaws and dangers" which Poland had avoided "thanks to the leadership role played by...the Gomulka tendency...a centrist tendency nonetheless evolving to the left..." (*Quatrième Internationale*, December 1956). Again the perspective was that of *pressuring* the bureaucracy, supporting one wing against another, and *not* mobilizing the workers around an independent Trotskyist party.

With the beginning of the 1960's, however, the Pabloists' eyes turned toward the so-called "Third World" and in particular the petty-bourgeois nationalists Ben Bella (Algeria) and Castro. While recognizing that the Cuban bourgeoisie had been expropriated as a class with the nationalizations of fall/winter 1960, they went further and gave *political* support to the Castro leadership. In this Pablo, Mandel et al. were joined by the American SWP, which in 1953 had belatedly but firmly rejected the liquidationist consequences of Pabloism. The SWP put forward a document ("For Early Reunification of the Trotskyist Movement") in March 1963 which stated: "In its evolution toward revolutionary Marxism, the [Castroite] July 26 Movement set a pattern that now stands as an example for a number of other countries." This was the founding document of the "United Secretariat" (USec) now headed by Mandel.

In another document at this time SWP leader Joseph Hansen wrote that Cuba was a workers state "lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule." It certainly was true that it lacked the forms...and the substance. In fact, Castro and Guevara proved this quite conclusively by jailing the Cuban Trotskyists in 1963. Trotsky's book, *Permanent Revolution*, was proscribed and the printing plates containing the offending text were smashed on the presses! Guevara, the USec's special favorite, even

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Mandel...

suggested that the Trotskyists were Yankee agents, noting that they had long had influence in the city of Guantanamo (near the U.S. base). But at this very moment Mandel was meeting with Guevara at the ministry of industry and counseling "my friend 'Che'" on economic policies. And what was he advising the "heroic guerrilla"-to-be? Was he "fighting for workers democracy" in the corridors of power, perhaps? Hardly. Here is what Mandel wrote in the journal of Guevara's ministry, *Nuestra Industria*:

"The more underdeveloped a country's economy...the wiser it is in our opinion to reserve decision-making power over the more important investments and financial matters to the central authorities."

—"Mercantile Categories in the Period of Transition," in Bertram Silverman, ed., *Man and Socialism in Cuba*

This is an anachronistic apology for the extremely irrational economic "planning" by the Cuban bureaucracy, where decisions were so centralized that everything was decided by the *lider máximo* from the saddle of his jeep.

The Stalinist repression did not faze the Pabloists. It seemed nothing could. Thus when Castro launched his famous, frothing attack against Trotskyism at the 1966 Tricontinental Congress in Havana, USec leader Hansen wrote that,

"however much it satisfied the right-wing CP leaderships, it was taken by all vanguard elements with any real knowledge of the Trotskyist movement as at best a mistaken identification of Trotskyism with the bizarre sect of J. Posadas and at worst nothing but a belated echo of old Stalinist slanders, the purpose of which remained completely obscure."

—*International Socialist Review*, November-December 1967

For the proletarian militants who had been locked up in Castro's prisons the purpose of his attack was not at all obscure. The USec apologists for Cuban Stalinism were

right about one thing, however. In denouncing Trotskyism Castro was directing his fire not at them but at those who call for political revolution to overthrow this bonapartist regime and replace it with the democratic rule of soviets. Any equation of the capitulationist policies of the USec with this Marxist program—uniquely upheld by the international Spartacist tendency—is clearly a case of mistaken identity. If the charge is Trotskyism then Ernest Mandel can plead in good conscience: "Not guilty!"

From Guerrillaism to Popular Frontism

The principal focus during the late 1960's of the Mandelites' quest for a shortcut to fame and fortune was the Castroite movement in Latin America. Thus a resolution passed at the USec's "Ninth World Congress" in 1969 stated point-blank:

"Even in the case of countries where large mobilizations and class conflicts in the cities may occur first, civil war will take manifold forms of armed struggle, in which the principal axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare..."

—"Draft Resolution on Latin America," in [SWP] *International Information Bulletin*, January 1969

The first task of USec supporters in Latin America, therefore, would be: "(a) Integration into the historic revolutionary current represented by the Cuban revolution and the OLAS..." This was in essence the same liquidationist perspective put forward in the early 1950's by Pablo—only the recipient of the political flattery and capitulations had changed.

Mandel, as is his wont, expressed himself more circumspectly on the subject of guerrillaism than gung-ho "pick-up-the-gun" Guevarists like Livio Maitan. But as to the continuity of Pabloist methodology Mandel was certainly frank; in an article on "The Place of the Ninth World Congress in the History of the Fourth International-a)" (1969), he wrote:

"The situation began to change in the course of the 1960's and it was the French May 1968 which most clearly revealed this



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change.... The Ninth World Congress sought to bring this change to the attention of the entire international revolutionary movement.

"The most striking trait of the change is the appearance of a new revolutionary vanguard on a universal scale which has completely escaped from the control of the Stalinist and reformist apparatuses and is organized autonomously. The first important signs of this new phenomenon go back quite a ways: the 'July 26 Movement,' which led the guerrilla struggle which overthrew the Batista dictatorship independently of the CP and of all traditional organizations of the Cuban left...."

"This turn is not only a turn toward the creation of independent organizations, capable of serving as poles of attraction for the militants of the new vanguard who are neither reformists nor Stalinists, and who seek to regroup nationally and internationally. It also implies a change of accent as to the principal forms of activity of the movement. In this sense it has the same importance as the turn outlined by the Third World Congress, but at a much more advanced stage of construction of the International."

The Third Congress of the Fourth International was when Pablo first elaborated his plans for "deep entry" into the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties. Mandel goes on:

"At the Third World Congress it was a question of breaking up essentially isolated activity and integrating into the revolutionary mass movement. At the Ninth World Congress it was a question of breaking with an essentially propagandist practice—i.e., centered on criticizing the betrayals and errors of the traditional leaderships....and of passing over to a phase where we are capable of undertaking revolutionary initiatives, within the mass movement."

—*La longue marche de la révolution* (1976)

In both cases the essence of the "tactic" was capitulation before alien class forces. The American SWP under Hansen objected to the "guerrilla turn" of the "Ninth Congress," but only because it wanted to make a bloc with liberals opposed to the Vietnam war. Democratic Party "doves" were not about to get on a platform with supporters of "terrorism" in Latin America. The Mandelites were not able to cash in on their maneuver, however. Castro's OLAS never did anything to organize "two, three, many Vietnamese" after Guevara's debacle in Bolivia. And the two main USec groups engaged in guerrilla struggle defected: the Bolivians to join the Castroite ELN en masse, and the Argentine PRT splitting from Mandel & Co. in 1973.

As it became clear that there was no short-cut to power in La Paz or Santiago by heading for the hills, the pro-Moscow Communist parties revived their refrains of a "peaceful road." In Chile the vehicle was to be the Unidad Popular (UP), a popular front of the Communist and Socialist parties together with small bourgeois parties, which was headed by Salvador Allende. Meanwhile in

Europe, in the aftermath of the 1968-69 working-class and youth upsurge the reformists were looking for means to head off a mass radicalization with revolutionary implications. Their answer was a new wave of popular frontism: the French Union of the Left, the Italian CP's strategy of an "historic compromise."

The Chilean experience was pivotal. In a certain sense it was a bridge from the guerrillaism of the late 1960's to the popular frontism of the 1970's. It was also—and most importantly—the battleground on which the drama of the popular front was played out to the bitter finale. The "peaceful road" ended in a bloodbath. The responsibility of the Stalinists and social democrats, who preached faith in the officer corps and "democratic" bourgeoisie, is patent. But neither does Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat have clean hands. First its Chilean supporters hailed Allende's 1970 electoral victory. Then, a year later, the USec itself issued a "unanimous" statement terming the UP a popular front and even declaring:

"Complete independence must be maintained with regard to the popular front coalition. Revolutionists cannot participate in such a coalition even by offering it electoral support. (Revolutionary Marxists can, in certain situations, vote for a labor candidate but not for a candidate of a front that includes petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties.)"

—*Intercontinental Press*, 21 February 1972

This policy was put forward only by the international Spartacist tendency at the time of the 1970 Chilean elections. Moreover, at no time since then has the USec refused to vote for all popular front candidates. But this curious declaration does indicate that they are not ignorant of the orthodox Trotskyist policy toward popular fronts...just opposed to it. In any case, none of the several groups of Chilean USec supporters ever carried out this policy. And in September 1973, on the morrow of the Santiago coup, a "Draft Political Resolution" by the USec's Mandelite majority reversed its previous verdict on the UP, declaring:

"...from the start, it differed from a classical Popular Front regime by the fact that it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road of socialism, and that it openly based itself on the organized workers' movement."

—[SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, October 1973

This deliberate confusionism, designed to cover up the USec's total failure to present a revolutionary alternative to Allende & Co., was soon compounded in Europe. In France in 1973, the Mandelite LCR called for votes to the Union of the Left on the second round in parliamentary elections; in 1974 it called for votes on the second round for the single candidate of the popular front for the presidency (Mitterrand); in 1977 it called for votes for Union of the Left slates (including bourgeois Left Radical candidates) on the second round of municipal elections, and with the scantiest of fig leaves called for abstention only where the slate was headed by a Radical.

Similarly in Italy the USec section ran candidates on the Democrazia Proletaria ticket in the June 1976 parliamentary elections. While standing to the left of the Communist Party's program for a coalition with the Christian Democrats, the DP advocated a Chilean-style popular front with the minor republican and secular parties of the bourgeoisie. And in Portugal not only did Mandel's disciples join a front, the FUT, which supported and had

continued on next page



Ho Chi Minh

Roger Pic

Mandel...

the blessing of a wing of the Armed Forces Movement; but in the June 1976 presidential elections USec Mandelite superstar Krivine advocated voting for Otelo de Carvalho, a general of the bourgeois officer corps!

From being handmaidens of the Kremlin in the 1950's and cheerleaders for the Castroites in the 1960's, these inveterate renegades from Trotskyism had become a left pressure group on the popular fronts of the 1970's.

Labels

When the United Secretariat was formed in 1963, both parties agreed to let "bygones be bygones," and differences over China, "deep entrism" and other disputed questions were declared off-limits. However, with the first signs of mass radicalization all the old differences resurfaced, with the SWP and its satellites squaring off against Mandel and friends (the old guard of Pablo lieutenants). The result was a factional struggle in the USec that lasted from 1969 to 1977, with bitter public attacks on each other by the SWP-led reformist minority and the centrist International Majority Tendency (IMT). When the IMT opened the door last year to dissolution of the factions, by backing off from its previous support to Guevarist guerrillaism, it was with the understanding that previous factional documents would be relegated to the status of "historical material."

Thus even though there is a real approximation of political appetites between the ex-IMT and the SWP during this popular front period, the USec remains a rotten

bloc. It is not surprising, then, that Mandel should periodically propose to abandon his phony "Fourth International" altogether, in favor of polymorphous groupings of the broad "far left." Such perverse creatures would unite virulently anti-Soviet Maoists, ostensible Trotskyists and syndicalist-spontaneists, with the only possible political basis being the desire to pressure a larger popular front of the traditional workers parties to the left. Thus in an interview with a Spanish leftist review in late 1976 Mandel stated:

"In my opinion the future of the revolutionary movement is in the kind of groups which are broader than those which call themselves Trotskyist. Groupings which, however, unite with sections of the Fourth International."

-*Topo Viejo*, November 1976

A few months earlier Mandel had floated the same concept in a dialogue with the left wing of the French PSU, led by none other than Michel Pablo. Asked if the French LCR wasn't closer to some of the Italian Mao-syndicalist groups than to the American SWP, Mandel responded:

"...the real debate is not over the label, the organizational framework, the statutes, the human relations or references to a fellow with a beard named Leon Trotsky...."

"What difference do labels make? If we should find in the political arena forces which agreed with our strategic and tactical orientation, and which were only put off by the historical reference and the name, we would get rid of the latter inside of 24 hours."

-*Politique Hebdo*, 10-16 June 1976

PSU left-wing leader Yvan Craipeau, himself a former Trotskyist, responded that it was not enough to change labels: it was necessary to renounce the Leninist conception of the party as well.



For Mao, the Cultural Revolution was a cynical maneuver to recover authority lost to party enemies during the "Great Leap" disaster.

Does this kind of maneuver offer the USec jugglers an effective means of reaching the "new vanguard," and subtly gaining hegemony over it? One only has to cast a brief backwards glance to observe the results of past attempts of this sort. The archetype of such a centrist grouping in the recent past is the Chilean MIR, a Castroite group set up in 1965 with the active intervention of the USec affiliate led by Luis Vitale. All the "labels" were abandoned (Fourth International, Trotskyism, permanent revolution, deformed/degenerated workers states), but on the basis of a vague left-of-the-CP program the USec's *World Outlook* (17 September 1965) declared the MIR the "most important Marxist-Leninist party yet to be formed in Chile...."

Less than two years later, however, the MIR leadership began systematically purging all "Trotskyists," soon including Vitale and other top leaders. Undaunted, the European Mandelites (and the expelled Vitale) continued flattering their centrist creation, and it was partly in order to stay close to the MIR that the IMT took a position of de facto "critical support" to the UP. The Latin American commission of the French LCR protested against the December 1971 USec resolution on Chile (quoted above) because of its mild criticisms of the MIR, claiming that the latter had "an absolutely clear position on the question of permanent revolution" and "the influence of Trotskyist positions" ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, February 1973). The Mandelites criticized their own fraternal organization in Chile as worse than the MIR, and have frequently raised large sums for the Castroites while leaving their comrades begging for crumbs!

But the classic example of the kind of "broad" grouping, "including Trotskyists," of which Mandel dreams is the Spanish POUM, established in 1935 as a fusion of the Communist Left (headed by Andrés Nin) and Joaquin Maurin's Workers and Peasants Bloc. It too dropped the

labels, and took ambiguous positions on the nature of Stalin's Russia, popular frontism and other vital issues. Trotsky's answer to this was to break all political ties to the renegade Nin and to call for a vigilant struggle within the Fourth Internationalist movement against those sympathetic to the POUM and similar centrist roadblocks. With its vacillations, this unstable amalgam became the worst enemy of proletarian revolution in Spain, Trotsky wrote. And that is precisely what would become of the products of Mandel's opportunist "regroupments" if they succeeded in gaining mass support.

Objectivism and Capitulators

In the last two years the major new development on the European left has been the appearance of a Eurocommunist current. As one might expect from Mandel, ever ready to tail after a new rage, the USec leader saw this process as possibly leading to a conversion of longtime Stalinist hacks like Santiago Carrillo into Leninists! In the second installment of the *Topo Viejo* interview quoted previously, Mandel refers to the contradiction between the "positive and negative aspect" of the rise of Eurocommunism:

"The leading comrades of the Communist Party, especially its worker cadres, must take on [this contradiction] and resolve it; and I hope and believe that they will be capable of resolving it positively, in the sense of returning to the path of revolutionary Marxism.

"Eurocommunism is a policy of transition, although no one knows what to or where to. Perhaps it represents a transition to the reabsorption of the Communist parties by social democracy, something which in my opinion is rather unlikely, but not totally impossible. Perhaps it will be a transition to a new Stalinism. And also—why not?—it could be a transition, on the part of the worker cadres of the party, to a reacquaintance with revolutionary Marxism, with Leninism."

—*Topo Viejo*, December 1976

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Mandel...

This brings us right back to 1950's vintage Pabloism, seeing the "leading comrades" of the CPs as perhaps salvageable for the revolution. Thus once again independent Trotskyist parties and an authentic Fourth International built in struggle against Stalinism, social democracy and all varieties of centrism are superfluous (mere "labels" to be discarded in the course of organizational maneuvers). But it should be obvious even to those unfamiliar with the various ostensibly Trotskyist groups that there is something grievously amiss with a "Trotskyist" who does not seek to build Trotskyist parties and a Trotskyist international. The sickness is diagnosed as Pabloist liquidationism, and Ernest Mandel is one of the prime carriers.

Mandel's political revisionism is closely linked to his economics, which are marked by a fundamental objectivism. In the early 1950's he argued that "the relation of forces has evolved decisively in favor of the anti-capitalist camp." Thus by lining up with the pro-Soviet parties one would be in position to capture leadership of the revolutionary mass movements which would inevitably be generated by the CPs. At the same time he argued that the restoration of capitalism in the USSR "is no longer in the realm of the possible" in the short run ("Decline and Fall of Stalinism," resolution presented to the Pabloist "Fifth World Congress," *Quatrième Internationale*, December 1957).

In the mid-1960's version of this objectivism, Mandel asserted that capitalism "will not again experience new crises such as 1929" (*Temps Modernes*, August-September 1964). Consequently under "neocapitalism" the transitional program was transformed into a smorgasbord of "anti-capitalist structural reforms." This objectivism is at the very heart of his outlook. Thus the opening sentence of his *Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory* reads: "In the last analysis, every step forward in the history of civilization has been brought about by an increase in the productivity of labor." Contrast this, for example, with the *Communist Manifesto*, which states equally succinctly: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

One of the best examples of Mandel's politico-economic objectivism is his January 1953 letter to Jean-Paul Sartre, written under the impact of the Chinese revolution:

"For us the nature of a period is not determined in the first instance by the leadership of the mass movement but by its extent.... Never in the history of capitalism has there been a period during which, over the entire globe, the number of participants, the violence and extent of this mass movement

have been as considerable as today. That is why we consider the present period as an eminently revolutionary period."
"... On the world scale, the relation of forces is evolving in a manner increasingly unfavorable to capitalism."

—*La longue marche de la révolution*

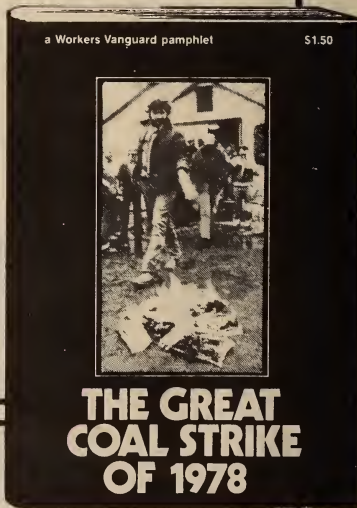
We have pointed out elsewhere the similarities between the economist objectivism of Mandel and Bukharin, with the former's "long waves" a more generalized version of the latter's "periods" of imperialism. Trotsky wrote in 1928 in response to Bukharin's draft program for the Stalinized Comintern—based on the assertion of a "Third Period" of terminal capitalist crisis—a polemic which utterly demolishes the objectivist tailism of Ernest Mandel:

"But as soon as the objective prerequisites have matured, the key to the whole historical process passes into the hands of the subjective factor, that is, the party. Opportunism which consciously or unconsciously thrives upon the inspiration of the past epoch, always tends to underestimate the role of the subjective factor, that is, the importance of the party and of revolutionary leadership. All this was fully disclosed during the discussions on the lessons of the German October, on the Anglo-Russian Committee, and on the Chinese revolution. In all these cases, as well as in others of lesser importance, the opportunistic tendency evinced itself in the adoption of a course that relied solely upon the 'masses' and therefore completely scorned the question of the 'tops' of the revolutionary leadership. Such an attitude, which is false in general, operates with positively fatal effect in the imperialist epoch."

—*Third International After Lenin*

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Swedish USec...

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the party," put forward a strategy counterposed to that of the KAF: the need to construct an alternative leadership, based on a revolutionary transitional program, to oust the pro-capitalist labor "leaders."

The reaction of the KAF leadership to "For a Trotskyist Program" was not a political reply but an attempt to instigate organizational measures against the dissidents on the grounds that their views overlapped those of the Spartacist tendency. At the instigation of one Jakob Lundmark, head of the former pro-SWP faction, the KAF Political Bureau (PB) addressed a letter to Christer and Gunilla demanding they affirm that the KAF and the USec were "revolutionary Trotskyist organizations which stand for revolutionary politics and represent a continuity back to the Fourth International's founding Congress in 1938 and the early Comintern" (letter of 26 November 1977). In a document we reprint below, the two comrades replied that the PB's demand for a loyalty oath was simply an attempt to expel them "solely on the basis of our political views and our political struggle." They noted they were being victimized for political "characterizations that were acceptable before this"—that is, before the bitter faction fight in the USec was shoved under the diplomatic rug.

In their courageous reply, the comrades exposed the USec rotten bloc, noting the former factions' public criticisms of each other and contrasting the PB's concern that they affirm the USec's "continuity" to the Fourth International with Ernest Mandel's infamous 1976 statement, "What do labels matter?" While noting the difficulty of judging any political current from a distance, Christer and Gunilla forthrightly refused to deny the "commonality" of their views with the iSt "on some questions."

The PB responded with a draconian recommendation that the two be expelled at the upcoming KAF congress. A special Commission of Inquiry was constituted and enjoined to discover some basis for this purge. The Commission began to take testimony from members of the several locals of which the dissidents had been members during their years in the KAF. Simultaneously, to provide a political cover, Lundmark distributed a turgid ten-page attack on Christer and Gunilla and the iSt, drawing heavily on the political distortions of ex-Spartacist Bob Pearlman, now in the American SWP.

But the scheme backfired. The witchhunting "inquiry" could produce not a shred of evidence of indiscipline by Christer and Gunilla, but only testimonials to their seriousness and disciplined functioning, as comrades who had worked with them in branches over the years testified to their dedication and active work as KAF members. Faced with the Commission's refusal to recommend that the comrades be expelled, the embarrassed leadership was abruptly forced to change its mind about taking up the question of disciplinary action at the congress. Despite a statement protesting the leadership's bureaucratic maneuver signed by 18 delegates, the matter was tabled to the next meeting of the KAF Central Committee. The CC set up yet another "investigative" body which was instructed to look into such matters as the oppositionists' "uncomradely tone." But even this second, presumably more carefully

picked, commission refused to cover for a purely political expulsion and again exonerated the two comrades.

The ferocious purge assault directed at Comrades Christer and Gunilla was a test of the KAF leadership's willingness to abandon the remnants of its left past to act as loyal flunkies for Mandel—a test which the KAF PB "passed" with flying colors. The leadership is moving to expunge from the cadres any left impulses remaining from the KAF in its earlier period. To their credit, some of the KAF cadres refused to be sucked into complicity with the leadership's cynical attempts to carry out the first political expulsion in the history of the organization. But the KAF has moved very far from the leftist impressionism of its younger days, and with the "help" of its international mentors of the USec it will rapidly complete its rightist consolidation.

In the months following the congress, the KAF has undergone massive disintegration. An internal bulletin noted:

"Education did not function. On the whole, members and candidates complain of lack of education. However, emphasis on pre-conference discussion went by the boards. The expectations of many people were transformed into disappointment.... Propaganda does not function in any meaningful way.... Recruitment is uneven...we have a minimum of local intervention...we are losing people in the trade unions."

Stockholm local bulletin No. 61

Members have been leaving the KAF in significant numbers. In fact, according to a leadership report to the Stockholm local, only one functional trade-union fraction remained in the city: day-care center employees. The state-capitalist Tendency D quit and the workerist Tendency C retreated into passivity, apparently content to allow the leadership to do as it pleased in exchange for being left in peace to do "its" trade-union work. Thus the main winner at the congress was the pro-SWP wing; with the KAF moving ever more to the right in its capitulation to the petty-bourgeois "movements" like anti-nuclear power and its rotten blocs with social democrats and Stalinists, the reformist political logic of the SWP is gaining strength in the organization.

Explosive factional potential still lurks beneath the diplomatic ceasefire in the USec. But the SWP's social-democratic reformism cannot be effectively combated by the impressionistic centrism of the IMT. To the SWP's "strategy" of becoming the "best builders" of petty-bourgeois and reformist organizations under the "theory" that "consistent" democracy equals socialism, the IMT can counterpose only a verbal sleight-of-hand which terms the disgruntlements of disparate strata a "new radicalization" of a new "vanguard."

Refusing to capitulate to joint majority/minority attempts to stifle all internal discussion in the KAF, Christer and Gunilla wrote a major political reply to the maneuvers of the KAF leadership and to Lundmark's slanderous attack on them and the international Spartacist tendency. Their document, which is also reprinted below, focuses on the political issues: Lundmark's falsification of the USec's own past; the leadership's capitulation to popular frontism in France and Chile, to Castroism in Cuba and more generally to Stalinism; Lundmark's pathetic attempts to distort the SWP's position on sending federal troops to Boston in order to justify it; and why the

continued on next page

Swedish USec...

USec leadership is obliged to blatantly distort positions of the international Spartacist tendency in ways obvious to anyone reasonably familiar with its published material.

However, even with all political discussion effectively blocked, with the organization in a shambles, with the IMT and SWP loyalists more than willing to join hands against any serious left opposition, Christer and Gunilla refused to abandon the struggle for the internationalist program of authentic Trotskyism, and resigned from the KAF in

February to pursue political discussion with the international Spartacist tendency. Through their work with the Stockholm Spartacist comrades and through such activities as the Stockholm public meeting on the KAF and the recent publication of the documentation of their oppositional struggle, the comrades demonstrate their commitment to assisting their former comrades of the KAF to find the road forward to the authentic Trotskyism of the iSt. ■

—adapted from “Swedish USec Face to Face with Trotskyism.” *WV* No. 204, 5 May 1978

Statement of Resignation from the KAF

To the Political Bureau/Executive Committee:

“The crisis of the proletarian leadership cannot, of course, be overcome by means of an abstract formula. It is a question of an extremely humdrum process. But not of a purely ‘historical’ process, that is, of the objective premises of conscious activity, but of an uninterrupted chain of ideological, political and organizational measures for the purpose of fusing together the best, most conscious elements of the world proletariat beneath a spotless banner, elements whose number and self-confidence must be constantly strengthened, whose connections with wider sections of the proletariat must be developed and deepened—in a word: to restore to the proletariat, under new and highly difficult and onerous conditions, its historical leadership.”

—Leon Trotsky, *Writings, 1935-36* (first edition), p. 112

After reading that tangle of distortions, slanders and outright falsehoods presented as a political document under the name of Jakob Lundmark (see “Comments on a Farewell to the Class Struggle and Politics”), we feel compelled to reply, even if only briefly.

If Lundmark’s document is the best that the SWP forces in Sweden (aided and abetted by the majorities) can produce, then the KAF is in worse shape than we thought. Distortions and falsehoods aside, the tendency throughout the document is the utter disdain of the KAF leadership for the history and politics of Trotskyism.

The KAF PB claims that a respect for the history and continuity of Trotskyism is a condition for membership in the KAF and the United Secretariat (USec).

Unfortunately, the Lundmark document clearly asserts that an evaluation of that history is a secondary question, subordinate to organizational maneuvers:

“The reunification did not solve the problems which led to the 52-54 split. This means that the International did not reach a common understanding of the deviation from the immediate perspective of the Transitional Program which characterized the development of world revolution after the Second World War. It was correct not to make discussion of the history of the International a roadblock to common work in an organization...” (Lundmark, p. 2)

In spite of assurances to the contrary, the KAF leadership proclaims here that it considers it correct not only to have no position on the last forty years of the history of the Trotskyist movement, but also to refuse to discuss this question. One cannot conceive of Lenin fusing with

Trotsky’s group in 1917 while “agreeing to disagree” about the disputes which earlier had separated the Bolsheviks from the Mensheviks and Conciliators (i.e., all the groups that wanted to reconcile the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks), or of Trotsky accepting a group into the Left Opposition or the Fourth International while passing over its history in silence!

The reason why these questions could not be discussed in 1963 is clear: while the SWP’s capitulation to the Pabloites was decisive, it was not yet complete, since differences still existed over the 1953 split, China and other crucial questions. Reunification was based on refusing to discuss these political differences. Yet the USec leadership today is sufficiently shameless to accuse those groupings in the International Committee which demanded a clarifying political discussion of “fleeing from political discussion,” supposedly “under the pretext of rejecting a capitulation to ‘Pabloism’” (Lundmark, p. 4). The hypocrisy of the KAF leadership knows no bounds.

The political rationale for this refusal to discuss questions of crucial importance to any serious Trotskyist is encapsulated in the statement, so characteristic of the KAF leadership: “While Marxist criticism takes as its starting point the actual movement of the masses in order to give them a scientific understanding of their experience...” (Lundmark, p. 5). This type of statement serves the USec as an excuse *not* to raise the Trotskyist program, but to capitulate instead to the “new mass vanguard.” This typically revisionist line was answered long ago by Trotsky:

“Our tasks don’t depend on the mentality of the workers. The task is to develop the mentality of the workers. That is what the program should formulate and present before the advanced workers. Some will say: good, the program is a scientific program; it corresponds to the objective situation but if the workers won’t accept this program, it will be sterile. Possibly. But this signifies only that the workers will be crushed since the crisis can’t be solved any other way but by the socialist revolution.”

—Leon Trotsky, *Writings, 1938-39* (first edition), pp. 43-44

The USec and KAF’s rejection of political program goes hand in hand with their mindless glorification of anything that “lives and struggles.” By giving “concrete struggles” priority over political clarification, the KAF leadership

simply echoes banally Bernstein's classic statement of revisionism: "The movement is everything, the final goal nothing." Lundmark and the KAF leadership are quite shameless about this: "... we support every struggle [sic!] against imperialist or bureaucratic oppression regardless of or despite the illusions which the masses have concerning petty-bourgeois leaderships or reformist solutions" (Lundmark, p. 6). That is true. Our leading Pabloists have tailed after petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships for years. The KAF leadership accuses us and the iSt of "parasitic sectarianism" (Lundmark, p. 6) for daring to criticize such petty-bourgeois leaderships. Again, we can do no better than to let Trotsky reply to such charges. In 1935 Pierre Frank and Molinier accused Trotsky's supporters of "organizational ultimatism" for refusing to capitulate to Marceau Pivert (old dogs never learn new tricks, it seems). Trotsky replied:

"No organizational ultimatism.' What a revolting distortion of the Leninist formulation! No ultimatism whatsoever in relation to the masses, the trade unions, the workers' movement; but the most intransigent ultimatism in relation to any group that claims to lead the masses. The ultimatism we are talking about is called the *Marxist program*."

—Leon Trotsky, *The Crisis of the French Section* (1935-36), p. 106

Trotsky's polemics against the Frank-Molinier clique, recently published in *The Crisis of the French Section* (1935-36), deserve wide circulation in the KAF.

It is because for the KAF and USec leadership "the struggle is everything, the program nothing" that they resort to unbridled demagoguery and feel free to falsify their own history as well as others'. We will take up a few examples of this below.

Lundmark gives a series of revealing examples of the way in which the Pabloists have "supported" various movements. Thus he says, "We could 'support' a Union of the Left government against a reactionary coup in the same way as the Bolsheviks supported Kerensky against Kornilov" (Lundmark, pp. 5-6). Quite true.

But that is not the question, comrades.

The question is, do you vote in elections to bring such a government to power? Do you vote for the popular-front Union of the Left (as the French LCR has consistently done) via one or several of its representative parties? Did you vote to bring Allende to power in Chile? Is Lundmark suggesting that the Bolsheviks should have "supported" the Kerensky government by voting for it if the opportunity had existed? Or should the Bolsheviks perhaps have supported Kerensky's government to the extent that it carried out progressive measures—a position resolutely opposed by Lenin. Apparently Lundmark does, since his document even declares support, in a different context, for the "Ben Bella government's anti-capitalist measures" (Lundmark, p. 6).

Comrades, it is blatantly dishonest and demagogic to compare voting to put a bourgeois government headed by a Kerensky (or an Allende, Mitterrand or Soares) into power with militarily defending their government against a rightist coup.

Furthermore, Lundmark declares his support for "the right of the Yugoslav workers state under Tito to act independently of the Stalin regime" (Lundmark, p. 6). Unfortunately, facts are tenacious. The Fourth International did more than just choose sides in a squabble between Stalinists. One of the very serious errors of the

Fourth International in the postwar period was to claim that Tito and the Yugoslav bureaucracy were "genuine communists" who had decisively broken from Stalinism. The International Secretariat repeatedly sought a political bloc with the Yugoslav Stalinists, even raising the possibility that they might join the Fourth International. "Work brigades" were also recruited to go to Yugoslavia to help "build socialism." This is a much different question than resolute opposition to the possibility of Soviet military intervention into Yugoslavia.

Concerning the question of Boston, Lundmark is forced to take refuge in omitting certain facts in order to hide the SWP's true position. Lundmark (p. 7) quotes the statement by Pearlman: "In practice... the call for federal troops was never countered to self-defense efforts." But in the very passages he quotes from Pearlman, he conveniently omits the following sentence: "At no time was the call for labor defense squads for Black students anything more than empty sloganeering" (B. Pearlman, "Spartacist: The Making of an American Sect," *Intercontinental Press* No. 21, [6 June] 1977, p. 648).

How can "empty sloganeering" be "complementary" to what the SWP claims was the "real" issue, namely calling on the bourgeois state to protect the rights of the oppressed?

Does the KAF reject, like Pearlman and the SWP, Trotsky's view in the Transitional Program?

"In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating *workers groups for self-defense*...."

"It is necessary to advance the slogan of a *workers' militia* as the one serious guarantee for the inviolability of workers' organizations, meetings and press."

—*Transitional Program*, 1977 Swedish edition, p. 38

Lundmark, together with Pearlman and the KAF and USec leaderships, is careful to avoid answering the question "Is it not, as the Spartacists assert, 'unprincipled' to demand that the armed forces of the bourgeois state defend the oppressed?" (Lundmark, p. 7). Instead, Pearlman scornfully dismisses as "Super-Marxists" those who, like Lenin and Engels, consider, to quote Pearlman, "that the state, in the last resort, is 'special bodies of armed men' and that therefore the police and the army are the 'arms of the ruling class'" (quoted by Pearlman, p. 649). What is the position of the KAF leadership on the SWP's fundamental revision of the Marxist concept of the state?

Finally, the KAF leadership attacks the Spartacists for putting forward the slogan "Military Victory to the NLF" during the antiwar movement in the U.S. and accuses them of "unmasking the NLF to the American masses" (Lundmark, p. 8). Just what is wrong with that? Before the Tenth World Congress even Ernest Mandel felt called upon to mildly chide the SWP for its slogan, "Out Now," and his criticism was repeated more forcefully by other USec leaders. Even within the KAF this criticism against the SWP was presented, wasn't it, comrades?

In order to attack our positions the KAF leadership is obliged to assume that its membership is ignorant and that even when comrades may recognize distortions and demagoguery they don't care enough about political program to object.

We reject these insults to the membership of the KAF. Not content to play on comrades' ignorance, Lundmark

continued on next page

KAF Resignation...

and the KAF leadership must resort to outright falsification.

Comrade Lundmark (and behind him the not so invisible hand of the SWP) accuses the International Committee [I.C.] of refusing to defend Cuba against imperialist attack, in particular during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. This is a serious charge; the problem is that it is false.

The statement which Lundmark quotes was issued by the I.C. on 28 October 1962 under the title "Defend the Cuban Revolution."

"The working class of the world must act to prevent the Cuban Revolution from being crushed. Such action must be independent of the policies of Khrushchev and the Soviet bureaucracy.

"... The International Committee of the Fourth International calls on all its sections to take their place in all actions for the defense of the Cuban Revolution from the US imperialists. "Cuba, as a sovereign state, has the right to accept whatever military aid it decides. But the setting up of Soviet missile bases as a *substitute* for the international working-class struggle cannot defend the revolution....

"In the advanced countries, especially the USA, the working class must organize actions in full support of the workers and peasants of Cuba. End the blockade! End the invasion preparations!"

Not content merely to rip a phrase out of context, Lundmark in the true spirit of the SWP falsifies even the portion he bothers to quote.

Of course, it is easy for the SWP to attack the obviously contradictory position of the Socialist Labour League (SLL: Gerry Healy's organization, now the Workers Revolutionary Party) that Cuba remained capitalist even after the massive nationalizations in late 1960. The I.C. position was a mechanical attempt to resist the simple characterization of Cuba as a workers' state made by the SWP and the Pabloites. But the KAF leadership feels it is irrelevant and unnecessary to proceed to a thorough analysis of what Lundmark calls the "shortcomings" of the Cuban leadership and [of his statement] that "The prospects of the development of the Cuban leadership were overestimated" (Lundmark, p. 2). Whatever one can say about the Spartacists, it cannot be denied that they have attempted to analyze this in a way which merits serious consideration. The correct position that Cuba was qualitatively a *deformed* workers' state by the end of 1960 was developed and adopted only by the Revolutionary Tendency within the SWP (which was to become the Spartacist tendency).

Rather than "fleeing political discussion" they have faced the issue of Cuba squarely. It is Lundmark's document which represents a determined attempt to evade the question.

The membership of the KAF has a right to answers to the following questions:

—if you now characterize Cuba as a deformed workers state, when did it become so? Why? How?

—if the Castro leadership is still characterized as "revolutionary," does this mean that non-Trotskyist leaderships can establish genuine workers states (whatever shortcomings they may have)?

—can there be a non-Trotskyist leadership which is "revolutionary" in the sense that Trotsky's Fourth International would have used the term?

We certainly do not claim to be fully familiar with all the positions of the international Spartacist tendency. However, even a quick and preliminary examination of their positions reveals an important falsification in Lundmark's account of their history.

According to documents published by the Spartacists, they were willing to remain disciplined members of the SWP and USec after the 1963 reunification, even though they were opposed to reuniting without political clarification of the central issues which had separated the Pabloite International Secretariat from Trotskyism for over 10 years.

However, the Spartacists were *EXPULSED* by the SWP; they did not "depart" as Lundmark claims. They appealed their expulsion to the 1965 World Congress but were answered by Pierre Frank:

"We call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers Party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise, namely the application of democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances."

Comrades, is this a statement the World Party of Socialist Revolution would have made?

It is not we, but the leadership of the KAF and the USec which are opposed to a political discussion of their past. It is the KAF leadership which "flees from political discussion" by refusing to even attempt to remedy what is so discreetly called a "weakness" which "should not be looked upon as a correct principle."

We believe that it is the duty of those who claim to be Trotskyists today to "reach a common understanding" and knowledge of the development of the world revolution after World War II. A "leadership" which refuses to discuss this question, while admitting having no position on it, can hardly claim to be Trotskyist.

We consider it a question of principle to be exonerated of the groundless charges about breaking discipline brought against us. Therefore we have appeared before the Control Commission [CC] in a disciplined fashion. It is with satisfaction that we see that the KAF leadership has been

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forced to retreat. The CC statement totally exonerates us of all charges.

Regarding the CC statement (which we demand be printed in an internal bulletin) that it is "the right of KAF members to sample and advocate other opinions within the organization," our rights were not at all that clear a few months ago.

The answer from the CC is hypocritical; from the very first moment it was clear that we were threatened with expulsion because of our *political positions* and not because of any possible breach of discipline.

That the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) deserves the attention of every serious militant is beyond any doubt. Even comrades from the United Secretariat have been forced to admit it, as the following quote demonstrates:

"...they have consistently maintained principled positions on such issues as feminism and nationalism; they have established a generally commendable record of support for other left tendencies under attack from the bourgeois state and have refrained from the use of violence against other left groupings (itself not a minor achievement in the light of the record of most other left formations in the U.S.). In a period in which other ostensibly Trotskyist tendencies have been characterized by bizarre deviations and hysterical excesses—from the Posadista call for a preemptive nuclear strike by the USSR (with socialism rising triumphant from the ashes) to the shrill 'fascism is around the corner' clamor of the American Wohlforthites (coupled with the Healy/Wohlforth

blatant opportunism and authoritarian party regime)—the Spartacist League has presented a sober, solid, down-to-earth tone that is refreshing."

—*Spartacist League: Anatomy of a Sect*,
Contribution to an Analysis of the American Left.
Education for Socialists by the RMG/Canada

Due to the bankruptcy of the leadership's politics, it appears impossible to carry on a political debate within the organization, and as clearly shown by the report on the work of the Stockholm local [local bulletin no. 61], demoralized members are now leaving the organization. And "militants" such as those in the ex-Tendency "C" are content to maintain an uneasy laissez-faire attitude vis-à-vis the leadership. Under such conditions we believe that *continuing our struggle for a revolutionary internationalist program* requires that we take up discussions with the international Spartacist tendency.

We believe that all serious KAF militants will face this same imperative and we urge them to join in such political discussions and in the *reforging of the Fourth International*.

Nacka

22 February 1978

With Trotskyist Greetings

C.

G.

Reply to the KAF Political Bureau

Comrades of the Executive Committee of the PB:

We have received your request that we confirm that the United Secretariat is Trotskyist, that the USec represents the continuity of the Fourth International and that we publicly defend that the USec is Trotskyist against all its opponents, especially against the international Spartacist tendency.

We are, have been and will be disciplined members of the KAF. We recognize unequivocally that the KAF's Central Committee and Political Bureau are our leading bodies, likewise that the United Secretariat is the leading body of the Fourth International and that we submit to its discipline.

The purpose of your letter and your questions in this matter does not lie in seeking our assurance that we are going to be loyal members of the organization. What you are really after is our ideas, our attempt to evaluate the political motion, possibilities and development of the KAF: the organization to which we have belonged for several years and to which we feel a responsibility both in regard to the organization as such, and its members.

What you are trying to do is really dishonest. First by trying to prevent our positions from reaching members of the KAF ("For a Revolutionary Trade Union Tactic," written in May, has not yet been published, nor has "For a Trotskyist Program," written in November, been published either internally or in *Internationales*).

After that you threaten expulsion solely on the basis of our political views and our political struggle. As far as we know, this is unique in KAF's history.

As you know these bureaucratic maneuvers are not new. Your administrative and bureaucratic measures are not a new invention. The technique of placing us on the bench of the accused, not for any break of discipline but because of our programmatic ideas, is only reminiscent of the Bolshevik party's destruction by the Stalin faction and Pablo's actions in destroying the FI around the time of the Third World Congress. It ought to be noted that things went a lot further than most of the well-meaning comrades in the original Stalinist and Pabloist factions undoubtedly intended.

Although our case is actually nothing but a form of witchhunt, we want to try and answer your questions.

In the first place, the Trotskyist program including its organizational norms is a decisive criterion for an organization that wants to call itself Trotskyist. This concerns the program as well as the actions.

What, then, is the USec's organizational relationship to Trotsky's Fourth International and the Trotskyist program? How do we decide this question? The answer to this is precisely the political discussion which you are trying to prevent.

Since 1968 the USec has been deeply split. Insofar as the harsh reality of the class struggle has brought forward clear political positions, unfortunately different parts of the USec have found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades on questions such as Angola, Portugal, their attitude toward Eurocommunism, toward the SWP/USA's demand that the army of the bourgeois state protect democratic rights, etc.

continued on next page

Reply to KAF PB...

It is impossible to deny that these viewpoints and positions flow from a political program (namely centrist and reformist) and these can hardly be called Trotskyist. Consequently the least one can do is to put a question mark after the USec's "Trotskyism."

The leadership of the ex-LTF, the SWP/USA, has a whole range of reformist viewpoints. That the SWP is reformist is a view which is shared by a large part of the IMT leadership including leading comrades in the KAF. Furthermore, the majority has publicly condemned the Argentine PST's position of support to the "process of institutionalization" in Argentina. During 1973-74 IMT supporters in North America openly described the SWP and the Canadian LSA as reformist and non-Marxist. When the Internationalist Tendency was expelled from the SWP solely because of this opinion the majority protested this political expulsion.

Have the leading comrades of the KAF changed their views on the expulsion of the IT?

The USec majority, to which our section belongs, has given a whole range of contradictory political answers under the pressure of different events in the class struggle. There unquestionably are comrades who honestly support the Leninist road, but we also have a political leadership which first is impressionist and secondly is swinging to the right. The KAF is soft on Eurocommunists, it seeks rotten blocs with left social democrats and Stalinists in the unions, these days the KAF even has difficulty in drawing the class line against the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie (to which the "terrorist affair and the immigrant incidents" attest), etc.

One of the central criteria for the Trotskyist Fourth International is its organizational norms regarding democratic centralism.

Has the functioning of the USec ever really been democratic centralist during the last years? Obviously not!

We have seen two factions, the IMT and the LTF, which have constantly publicly criticized each other. We have seen different national sections refuse to abide by the decisions of the World Congress. In short, the USec doesn't function as a democratic centralist organization. And isn't this precisely one of the criteria by which we can characterize an organization as Trotskyist or not?

The USec's failure to function according to democratic centralism does not automatically disqualify it as Trotskyist. It does raise a question as to whether or not it can be called the Fourth International.

It is also a proof of the absolute necessity of the struggle that we have begun to wage in the KAF.

Your letter seems to put forward the tautological assertion that the FI is Trotskyist and that for an individual to say that the USec or some section of it is not Trotskyist is sufficient to call his membership status into question. Despite this, such statements were made rather frequently before the Tenth World Congress. A whole wing of the majority wanted to break with the SWP/USA. Parts of the LTF characterized the IMT as centrist.

Why do you single us out for our political descriptions and characterizations that were acceptable before this? Let us look at what this could lead to in an extreme case.

In hunting after a fusion with parts of the French PSU under the then-leadership of Michel Pablo, Ernest Mandel made the following statement in the French paper *Politique Hebdo* (10 June 1976) cited in *Intercontinental Press* No. 37 (1976).

"What do labels matter? If in the political arena we found forces that agreed with our strategic and tactical orientation and which were put off only by our name [Fourth International] and historical references [Trotsky] we would drop these things within twenty-four hours."

Apparently for Mandel the question of Trotskyism and the Fourth International is only a bagatelle. If your procedures were not merely "sanitary measures," aimed at getting the KAF congress to expel us, you would

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(W. Hohmann)

immediately take up the struggle for the Eleventh World Congress to remove Mandel as the USec's leading spokesman. Instead of doing this you are making us scapegoats.

Furthermore, if the characterizations we made of the SWP and Moreno's PST, which we think that some of you share, are correct, then we think you should investigate whether or not they are Trotskyist. You should do this in order to either adopt their line or denounce it. Instead you choose to hunt us down.

Finally, you raise the question of the iSt. It is naturally difficult for us to judge an organization's practice from afar, but as far as we can tell, the positions of the iSt are those of Trotskyism, and therefore we feel sympathy and a commonality with them on some questions. Naturally the positions of the iSt, like those of the USec or any other organization, have to be tested in practice.

From that perspective, it seems like the SWP sees the Spartacist League as a real force in the USA. We think that the discussion between comrade Pearlman (a former SL member) and the Spartacist League should be thoroughly studied by all comrades in the KAF. Pearlman's document can be found in *Intercontinental Press* Nos. 21, 22 (1977) and the Spartacist League's answer in *Workers Vanguard* Nos. 168 and 170.

It is scandalous of you to ascribe to us the views of the iSt, an organization whose practice we know little about, and to counterpose them to the USec. Not even the Spartacists themselves claim that they are any "counter"-Fourth International. They do not claim to be an international in competition with any other. On the other hand they do claim to uphold the political program of Trotskyism.

The USec has recently been active in trying to regroup "the left" to its advantage. In the USA and in Sweden [the USec] has even admitted organizations and individuals which had political positions similar to those who at the time of the Second World War and Korean War quit the Fourth International and betrayed its program. We are talking about so-called state capitalists like the RMC in the SWP

and the so-called study group or "Tendency D" in KAF.

You seek to counterpose yourselves to an organization which sees itself as orthodox Trotskyist and which shares many fundamental programmatic positions with critical left comrades in the USec. An organization which shares our position against the opportunist leadership of the USec—a leadership which accepts into membership those who call the defense of the Soviet Union into question and who in fact oppose defending the deformed and degenerated workers states against imperialist attack. You disassociate yourselves from an organization which wages a principled fight for a proletarian and not petty-bourgeois line in the class struggle.

If the KAF was the genuine and Trotskyist organization that it claims to be, then it should take up discussions with the iSt, if for no other reason than to politically unmask them. But why not investigate the possibilities for principled fusion? And not, as is now the case, put a Spartacist crown of thorns on our heads.

One of the things that we found positive about the iSt is that at the time of the 1963 reunification congress (when a lot of work was done to bring the so-called Healyites and Lambertistes into the USec) they were prepared to participate in this reunification. This can be seen clearly from their various publications. Instead they were met by bureaucratic maneuvers and expulsion, no doubt an attempt to destroy them. This did not succeed and furthermore the iSt now is a small but nevertheless international current, while not claiming to be in organizational competition with the USec.

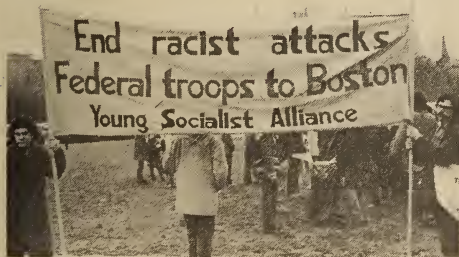
It seems to us that the leadership of the KAF is now reproducing a similar process in trying to expel us before the congress. Comrades, why do you want your bureaucratic maneuvers to prove (by expelling us) what we are trying to prove, namely, that the KAF and the USec are neither Trotskyist nor the Fourth International. These are political questions which have to be solved by an open political debate and not by bureaucratic expulsions. A debate which you are using administrative measures to prevent.

You can be sure that as long as we are members of KAF and the USec, we will unequivocally defend their positions in public (including against the representatives of the international Spartacist tendency). At the same time we assure you that we are going to continue to struggle for Trotskyist unity in a genuine democratic, as well as centralist, international organization.

With comradely greetings,

Christer F.

Gunilla S.



Workers Vanguard

Once critical of the American SWP's reformist policy of preaching reliance on capitalist state, the KAF now chastises the Swedish state for failing to intervene on behalf of harassed immigrants and political refugees who are denied asylum.

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Swedish USec Face to Face with Trotskyism

"Like alchemists of the old days, they are looking for the saving formula," Christer F. told a recent Spartacist public meeting in Stockholm, Sweden. Comrade Christer was talking about the centrist Kommunistiska Arbetarförbundet (KAF—Communist Workers League), Swedish section of the United Secretariat (USec), of which he had been a long-time member before finally rejecting the USec's brand of get-rich-quick opportunism and solidarizing with the principled Trotskyist politics of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt). Comrade Christer recounted the story of his oppositional struggle in the rightward-moving KAF, which culminated at the KAF national congress last December with the KAF leadership's hilariously ineffectual efforts to railroad him and a cothinker, Comrade Gunilla, out of the organization.

It all began when the two left oppositionists submitted a document, "For a Trotskyist Program," in November during the pre-conference discussion period. Though centrists must be professional confusionists and abhor above all any attempt at programmatic clarity, the furor unleashed by the document is explicable only in terms of the precarious internal situation of the KAF. The USec's uneasy truce between the former International Majority Tendency (IMT) of Ernest Mandel and the faction led politically by the reformist American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has been dutifully carried out in Sweden through the dismantling of Tendencies A and B. But disgust with the social-democratic SWP has not been fully expunged from the ranks of the KAF, which has historically been rather leftist within the USec spectrum. Thus the two oppositionists were heaping salt on still-open wounds when they wrote:

"Today the KAF assists in spreading illusions about the bourgeois state. The bourgeois state and its repressive apparatus are charged with failure to intervene on behalf of immigrants who are harassed, political refugees who are turned away, and 'terrorists' who are sent packing.... The Malmö local called for better behavior on the part of cops in connection with attacks on immigrants (*Internationalen*, 12 August 1977).

"This is indeed different from a few years back when the KAF protested against the SWP as the latter put forward the demand that police/military troops should be sent in to defend (sic!) blacks in Boston."

—"For a Trotskyist Program"

The document also castigated the USec for increasingly open abandonment of the Trotskyist principle of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism:

"Defense of the Soviet Union is abandoned—evidently it is acceptable these days to endorse appeals with Maoists and the bourgeoisie aimed directly against the deformed and degenerated workers states. The SWP is even permitted to fuse with a state capitalist grouping without protest from any leading organ."

In Sweden, a country which directly faces the Soviet Union across the Baltic Sea (the nearest major city to Stockholm is Leningrad), this is certainly no abstract question. The oppositionists noted that the cadres who founded the KAF in 1971 had been gained largely from the sizable Swedish

Maoist groups through the posing of Trotskyist positions on such questions as the class nature of the Soviet Union.

The left critics' insistence on discussing the differences between the pro-IMT and pro-SWP wings of the USec was certainly galling to the KAF leadership, which has tried to relegate them to the status of "merely historical" disputes (the USec's equation of "historical" with unimportant itself speaks volumes). But an even more sensitive subject raised by Christer and Gunilla was the question of the KAF's founding trade-union work. After the dissolution of Tendencies A and B, a workerist current, Tendency C, remained to plague the KAF leadership's dreams of internal peace. Though this current was far from possessing a coherent critical analysis of KAF trade-union work, its formation reflected uneasiness within the organization over the KAF's turn from "putting the union up against the wall" to attempts to become a pressure group on the union bureaucracy, often through forming propaganda blocs with left social democrats or Stalinists. "For a Trotskyist Program," with its insistence that "KAF should have communists in the trade unions and not trade unionists in

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**För pånyttfödelsen av
Fjärde Internationalen!**



**TROTSKISTISK OPPOSITION
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**Dokument från
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EURO- REVISIONISTS TAIL STALINIST BREAKAWAYS

As a revolutionary leader he is worse than worthless. But as a political weathervane he is almost unerring. Yes, Ernest Mandel, that internationally renowned guru of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USeC), certainly is a master at bending with the shifting political winds in the European left.

During the heyday of New Left adventurism Mandel presented the USeC as the true embodiment of the heritage of "Che." Along comes the pre-revolutionary crisis in Portugal and Mandel was to be found providing a left cover for the arch-Stalinist Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) of Alvaro Cunhal. And when Eurocommunism replaced Portugal in the headlines Mandel became the self-appointed lawyer for that arch-enemy of the Kremlin-loyal Cunhal: premier Eurocommunist Santiago Carrillo of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE)!

Such posturing might be regarded as a farcical burlesque if it weren't so positively obscene. Here is Mandel eulogizing "Che" on the tenth anniversary of his murder while at the same time prettifying the Eurocommunists, who truly hate the memory of Guevara because the martyred guerrilla still remains an inspiration to their "far left" opponents. One wonders whether the consummately

cynical Mandel even felt a twinge of shame when Italian Communist Party (PCI) leader Paolo Bufalini told the PCI central committee: "I would have given Guevara a medal for heroism and simultaneously condemned him to death for indiscipline" (quoted in *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 7 May 1978). That's how the Scheidemanns and Noskes of Italy today pay tribute to the idealist Stalinist adventurer uncritically lionized by the Mandelites.

But Guevara is dead now, as are many of the subjectively revolutionary Latin American youth who tragically followed the line of the professor from the Louvain and actually "picked up the gun." There is a cynical adage from American courtroom parlance which applies to Mandel: the lawyer always goes home.

Mandelite tailing after Eurocommunism did not fall out of the sky. The shift from enthusing over the heroic adventurism of a "Che" to apologizing for the pro-imperialist parliamentary cretinism of the Eurocommunists is consistent with Mandel's twenty-five year history of Pabloist impressionism on the question of Stalinism. This liquidationist revisionism which organizationally destroyed the Fourth International in 1953 was succinctly stated (a rare virtue for the Pabloists, who clothe their

abrogation of Marxism in bombast) in a document entitled "*The Rise and Decline of Stalinism*" which the Pabloist "International Secretariat" adopted at its rump "Fourth World Congress" in 1954:

"In countries where the CPs are a majority in the working class, they can, in certain exceptional conditions (advanced disintegration of the possessing classes) and under the pressure of very powerful revolutionary uprisings of the masses, be led to project a revolutionary orientation counter to the Kremlin's directives, without abandoning the political and theoretical baggage inherited from Stalinism.... This perspective—namely not an organizational disintegration of the mass Communist parties, but rather a disintegration, molecular for an entire period, of the bureaucratic relations which extend from the Kremlin down to the ranks of these parties—is essential for determining the forms of intervention by our movement in this process in order to make it evolve in a direction favorable to revolutionary Marxism."

—reprinted in *The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism*, Socialist Workers Party (SWP) "Education for Socialists" Bulletin (March 1970)

The "forms of intervention" have indeed varied: from deep entrisms into the mass reformist parties of Western Europe during the 1950's and 1960's, to the futile search for the elusive "new mass vanguard" outside of the "bureaucratic apparatuses" of the workers movement following the 1968 May events in France, to attempting to broker a lash-up of the "far left" that could act as a left pressure group on the popular front. But the thrust continues to be liquidationism: to find a substitute for the proletariat organized by its conscious vanguard under the banner of the Fourth International in resolving the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

In the past the Pabloists have tailed those Stalinist bureaucrats, whether in Havana, Hanoi or Lisbon, who could be portrayed cynically as resolute opponents of U.S. imperialism. But with their positive orientation to Eurocommunism the Mandelites are now tailing CP tops who desire to break down barriers to Washington. Mandel's endless maneuvers aimed at conjuring up a "new mass vanguard" lead him to follow the shift to the right in radical petty-bourgeois opinion. Thus the Mandelites have crawled back to the "bureaucratic apparatuses" which they spurned only yesterday; and from there to tailing popular

frontism and becoming apologists for the pro-NATO Berlinguer, the pro-monarchist Carrillo, and the pro-force *de frappe* Marchais.

Arising in the context of the anti-Soviet "human rights" offensive of U.S. imperialism, Eurocommunism represents the attempts of the CP leaderships to prove both to their "own" bourgeoisies and to Washington that they can be entrusted with ministerial portfolios and seats in the councils of NATO. These parties' much-touted "independence" from Moscow and their shedding of even the pretenses of Marxist and Leninist phraseology (to which they decreasingly paid lip service) clearly represent shifts to the right by the major mass Communist parties of Western Europe. The European-based USec majority must therefore discern some kind of "progressive dynamic" in the thoroughly reformist parties which betrayed the French strikes of 1968 and the Italian strike wave of the following year.

The emergence of Eurocommunism has provided a rallying point for diverse political tendencies with appetites to pressure the CPs from the left and from the right. Mandel has obvious opportunist appetites to broker a grand regroupment of left social democrats and pro-Eurocommunists—all along appealing to the "far left" to join his fake "Fourth International" and get in on the action. His scheme was quite clearly revealed last May when the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), mainstay of the Mandelite USec majority, hosted a big fête featuring French Communist Party (PCF) historian Jean Elleinstein, French Socialist Party leader Gilles Martinet, an official delegation from Carrillo's Spanish Communist Party, Ukrainian dissident Leonid Plyushch and two so-called "progressive" officers, a retired French general and an admiral. Admiral Sanguinetti, who ran in the March elections on the SP ticket, defended French colonial butchery in Indochina and Algeria and praised the "democracy" of Hitler's Wehrmacht! Of course, on this platform the LCR kept mum about such fundamental Trotskyist positions as class opposition to popular fronts and unconditional defense of the Soviet Union. Instead, LCR spokesman Bensaïd concentrated his remarks on echoing the attacks of the Eurocommunists on the "model of the Soviet revolution" and posting the

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Mandel (left) demagogically claims that Carrillo (right) "completely rehabilitates" Andrés Nin, the Spanish POUM leader murdered by the Stalinists. In fact, Carrillo condemns Nin's role in the Barcelona May Days as "an act of treason."

Speartist Canada

Workers Vanguard

"cohabitation" of the "democratic" institutions of bourgeois dictatorship with "proletarian democracy" after the revolution.

Capitulation to the popular front has led the Mandelites to orient toward the *rightist* currents in Western European Stalinism as well as their social-democratic would-be allies. "Euro-Trotskyism"—as the Mandelite line was so aptly dubbed by that Spanish prophet of Eurocommunism, Fernando Claudín, at the May LCR fête—represents a significant social-democratization of the USec majority. Its adaptation to Eurocommunism put the centrist Mandelites on a rightist, anti-Soviet course which led to a genuine though limited narrowing of differences with its main factional opponent within the USec, the viscerally social-democratic American Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

To date the most synthetic presentation of the USec majority's line on Eurocommunism is the recent book by Mandel entitled *From Stalinism to Eurocommunism* (1978). Its key chapter is "Three Facets of Eurocommunism," which first appeared as an article in the Mandelite international journal *Inprecor* (its English-language edition now "incorporated" into the *Intercontinental Press* of the SWP).

In this article Mandel musters his quite considerable powers of obfuscation to portray Eurocommunism as a phenomenon whose basic political character remains to be determined but which is pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. Eurocommunism is here described as a "contradictory" phenomenon. But Mandel does *not* mean contradictory in the sense used by Trotsky, namely, that with their decisive passage into the camp of reformism in 1933 the CPs became *bourgeois workers* parties not qualitatively different from the Social Democracy.

Rather, Mandel portrays Eurocommunism as contradictory in the sense of political schizophrenia. It supposedly has three "facets": one is not so good, but the other two are fraught with revolutionary implications. In relation to their own imperialist bourgeoisies the Eurocommunist parties are said to be moving to the right. But with regard to the Soviet bloc and their own restive ranks Mandel claims that Eurocommunism is a progressive, indeed even "objectively revolutionary," force.

Of course, Mandel cannot deny that the Eurocommu-

nists are seeking an ever greater integration within their "own" bourgeois order. His article begins on a seemingly orthodox Trotskyist note: "More than anything else Eurocommunism represents a codification of the rightward evolution of the West European Communist parties since the Seventh Congress of the Comintern." Moreover, he admits that "the decisive factor" motivating the CP leaderships is the attempt "to overcome parliamentary isolation, and to link up with Social Democracy and the 'liberal' bourgeoisie."

But for Mandelite "dialectics" there are two sides to every contradiction: that which exists in reality and that which exists as an objectification of opportunist appetite. Thus this high priest of Pabloism writes:

"From the historical standpoint, however, Eurocommunism is not simply a confirmation of the (further) rightward turn of most of the West European Communist parties. It also represents a right turn under particular conditions, *new in and of themselves*. First, it is occurring during a period of rising and sometimes stormy upsurge of mass struggles in Southern Europe, which has bordered on pre-revolutionary and revolutionary situations." [emphasis added]

But "from the historical standpoint" popular frontism was precisely a product of "rising and sometimes stormy" class polarizations and conflicts. What were the "particular conditions" prevailing in Spain and France in the mid-1930's, and in Italy and France immediately after World War II, if not "stormy"?

What Mandel seeks to obscure is that Eurocommunism is the product of the *defeats and betrayals* of the "sometimes stormy upsurge of mass struggles in Southern Europe," especially Portugal. And here Chile should be added where even Mandel is forced to acknowledge in "Three Facets" that for the Eurocommunists:

"The old 'wisdom' of Social Democracy was affirmed: avoid a comprehensive test of strength with the bourgeoisie. When the exacerbation of class contradictions and the polarization of political forces in the context of a pre-revolutionary situation leads to such a test of strength, then the political conclusion drawn from this 'wisdom' is simple: curb the mobilization of the workers, even if this divides the toilers and demobilizes entire layers of the proletariat. The successful application of this line can lead only to the victory of counter-revolution."

The fall of Allende convinced Berlinguer's PCI that the Chilean Popular Unity government had been "too radical" and had too narrow a base of *bourgeois* support. So the Italian Stalinists rejected seeking a popular front with a liberal minority of their own bourgeoisie in favor of a coalition with the dominant ruling-class party, the staunchly anti-Soviet, pro-American Christian Democrats. Moreover, Berlinguer's party recognized that the final arbiter of the "historic compromise" resided not in Rome but in Washington. Hoping to forestall an Italian Pinochet, the PCI decided it should not bid for direct governmental participation without first securing the support or at least the benign neutrality of American imperialism.

Portugal in the spring and summer of 1975 was the sharpest, most important conflict between Stalinism and Social Democracy in Western Europe since the height of the Cold War in the 1950's. After the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) toppled the right-wing Caetano dictatorship in the spring of 1974, Cunhal's PCP pursued a policy of support to left-nationalist military bonapartism.



Portuguese Stalinist chief Cunhal.

Paris Match



At the height of the prerevolutionary crisis in Portugal the Mandelites tailed the left-talking section of the bonapartist bourgeois officer caste (left), while the SWP reformists cheered the anti-Communist mobilizations spearheaded by the Portuguese social democrats who were funded by the CIA (right).

When Mario Soares' Socialist Party won a large plurality in the April 1975 Constituent Assembly elections, it demanded a strong government led by itself to suppress the conditions of "anarchy." In order to stay in power the left-MFA/PCP Fifth Provisional Government was forced at the time to tolerate the workers commissions, neighborhood commissions and soldiers committees. In the summer of 1975 Soares' Socialists, fully and actively backed by U.S. imperialism and West European Social Democracy, moved to overthrow the Fifth Provisional Government in order to suppress these embryos of dual power and to eject the pro-Moscow PCP from office.

The increasingly violent conflict between Soares' Socialists and Cunhal's Communists produced a deep rift in the European Stalinist movement. The Italian and Spanish CP leaderships were greatly upset when the left-MFA/PCP regime did not turn power over to the social democrats after the latter won the Constituent Assembly elections; moreover, they were embarrassed by the ideological justification for this course coming out of Lisbon and Moscow. The founding document of Eurocommunism—the joint statement of principles by Berlinguer's PCI and Carrillo's PCE in July 1975—was expressly designed to dissociate these parties from Cunhal's PCP and its Kremlin backers.

Unlike the Italian and Spanish CPs, Marchais' PCF was sufficiently conservative to defend Cunhal, a stance that proved quite damaging to its popular-front politics in France. The French Communists came under heavy fire from their popular-front partners for their line on Portugal; for a time this issue even threatened to split the Union of the Left.

Just as Berlinguer learned from the 1973 Chilean coup that the PCI should ally with the dominant bourgeois party, so Marchais drew the lesson from the fall of the left-MFA/PCP regime in September 1975 that the PCF could not extend its influence in opposition to a strong social-democratic party, behind which stood U.S. imperialism. In November Marchais journeyed to Rome where he and Berlinguer issued a declaration of principles similar to the PCI/PCE statement in July. Cunhal's hapless fate pushed

Marchais into the Eurocommunist camp.

Just as the incipient civil war in Portugal deeply polarized the world Stalinist movement, so it almost split the USec into its main component parts: the Mandelite centrists and the reformist SWP. Characteristically, the USec majority tailed the left-bonapartist/Stalinist bloc. The Mandelite Liga Comunista Internacionalista went so far that in August of 1975 it signed a formal agreement supporting the program of the Fifth Provisional Government, in effect entering a short-lived popular front with the left-MFA/PCP regime.

On the other side, no event revealed the social-democratic, anti-communist nature of the American SWP more starkly than the 1975 Portuguese crisis. In the name of "defending democracy" the SWP cheered the CIA-funded Socialists as they spearheaded the rightist mobilization against the Stalinists, the "far left" and the embryos of revolutionary dual power. The SWP's "State Department socialist" line on Portugal was a key factor in its fusion with

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SPARTACIST

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the Shachtmanite anti-Soviet-defensist Revolutionary Marxist Committee in 1977. The positions of the Mandelites and SWP on Portugal in 1975 would literally have placed them on opposite sides of the barricades.

Terminological Chicanery

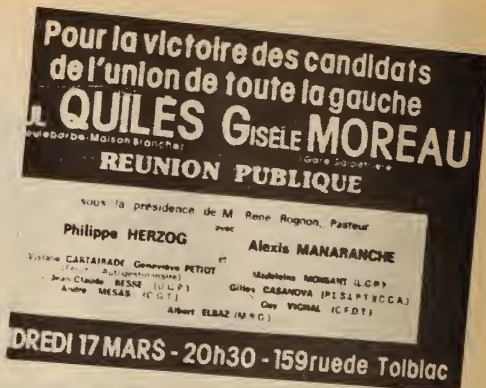
Although Mandel speaks about the "social democratization" of the West European CPs, his actual purpose is to argue that the Eurocommunist parties stand to the left of the present-day social-democratic parties. In the first essay of his book Mandel puts his cards on the table for all to see:

"But we have never said that the Communist parties are in the process of being transformed into the miserable Social Democracy of Helmut Schmidt, Wilson-Healey-Callaghan, or Mario Soares. What we have underscored are the evident parallels with the evolution of classical Social Democracy of 1910-30, which should not be confused with contemporary Social Democracy."

The deliberate confusionism in this passage is so many-sided, it is difficult to sort out. To begin with, the periodization of "classic Social-Democracy" from 1910 to 1930 is sheer invention on Mandel's part. The social-democratic movement underwent no definitive change in 1910 or in 1930. It did, however, undergo a qualitative change in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I, when the International fragmented into hostile, social-patriotic parties.

As Mandel well knows, the Leninist-Trotskyist tradition regards pre-World War I Social Democracy as a *centrist* current vacillating between revolutionary and reformist politics. To assert that Eurocommunism is analogous to early Social Democracy is equivalent to asserting that these parties are centrist.

By identifying Eurocommunism with Social Democracy in the period from 1910 to 1930 Mandel avoids dealing with the question of the popular front. However, a decade before Kautsky formulated what Mandel portrays as the doctrinal forerunner of Eurocommunism, classic Social Democracy indeed confronted "popular frontism" in the form of Millerandism. When in 1899 the French Socialist



Under slogan calling for "Victory of the Entire Left" Pabloists are billed with the MRG, the bourgeois Left Radicals.

Alexandre Millerand entered a bourgeois cabinet, he anticipated the principal expression of reformism in the imperialist epoch in bourgeois-democratic countries with mass parties based on the labor movement. After an initial softness toward Millerandism, the Bebel/Kautsky leadership of German Social Democracy definitely rejected socialist participation in a capitalist government.

In his 1908 book *The Road to Power* Kautsky stated:

"Whoever looks upon the Socialist party as a means of freeing the proletariat, must decisively oppose any and all forms of participation by that party in the ruling corruption. If there is anything that will rob us of the confidence of all honorable elements in the masses, and that will gain us the contempt of all those sections of the proletariat that are capable of and willing to fight, and that will bar the road to our progress, it is participation of the Socialists in any coalition or 'bloc' policy."

This passage marks pre-War Kautskyism on the question of socialist entry into bourgeois governments as qualitatively to the left of *all* Stalinist parties since 1934-35 and the USeC majority!

Since 1934-35 the Stalinist parties have not been intrinsically (as distinct from conjuncturally) to the left of the social-democratic parties. As Trotsky wrote after the Seventh (Popular Front) Congress of the Comintern in 1935: "Nothing now distinguishes the Communists from the Social Democrats except the traditional phraseology, which is not difficult to unlearn" ("The Comintern's Liquidation Congress," *Writings*, 1935-36). In the Spanish Revolution and Civil War (1936-37) the Stalinists stood on the far right wing of the "popular front" coalition as the most implacable enemies of proletarian dual power. In 1937 the Stalinists toppled the popular Socialist leader Largo Caballero because he was insufficiently ruthless in suppressing the revolutionary workers led by the anarchists and the centrist POUM.

And Spain was not unique in this regard. As Mandel himself noted, in 1945 the Kremlin and its British followers advocated that the Labour Party continue its wartime coalition with Churchill's Tories. Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin rejected this Stalinist line. Within the



French Pabloists yearn for a return to the halcyon days of the Union of the Left.

framework of reformism the British Labour government of 1945-51, which nationalized a number of major industries and introduced socialized medicine, was far to the left of the present-day Italian Communist Party, whose program of economic austerity and "law and order" aims at reversing the economic gains made by the working class since the "red autumn" of 1969 and strengthening the repressive state apparatus. On key issues in Italian political life (the 1974 divorce referendum, the Moro kidnapping) Berlinguer's PCI has been to the right of the Socialist Party of De Martino/Craxi. Likewise, in the Chilean Unidad Popular government the CP constituted the far-right-wing defender of the bourgeois order.

By the time Mandel finishes dealing with the first "facet," Eurocommunism comes off looking not all that bad. Then Mandel settles down to saying what he really wants to say: since Eurocommunism has aroused illusions in the West European and to a certain extent East European working class and among intellectuals, therefore it is more potent and relevant than Trotskyism. Mandel maintains that when they criticize the Kremlin and make noises about workers democracy, the Eurocommunists are not making overtures to their own bourgeoisie or to U.S. imperialism but in fact are responding to pressure from the proletariat. It is a classic case of the prophet pretending that it's the mountain and not himself that's doing the moving.

Here then is the key passage in "Three Facets" and indeed in the entire book *From Stalinism to Eurocommunism*:

"As we have already shown, the main reasons for the tactical turns of the Eurocommunists during past years have related to electoral policy: the aim is to overcome a specific obstacle to reaching voters (and trade-union sympathizers to some extent). From this standpoint, the Eurocommunists' criticism of the repressive policies of the Soviet bureaucracy can in no way be designed to win bourgeois or 'upper middle class' votes.... In other words: the growing criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy is a concession primarily to the West European working class itself and not to the bourgeoisie....

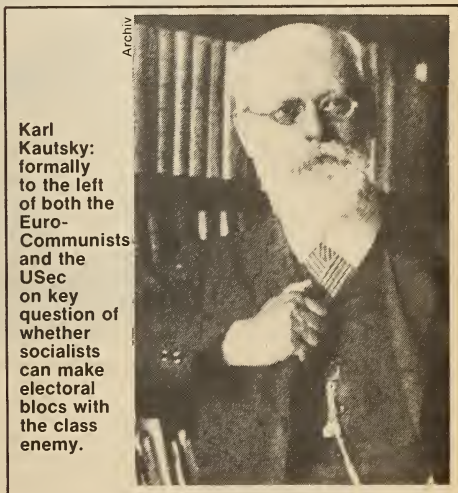
"Under these conditions [of militancy in the CP ranks], the Eurocommunists' criticism of the Kremlin is in large part not a concession to bourgeois ideology and influence within the working class, but a concession to the anti-bureaucratic components of the average consciousness of the combative layers of workers, which is now undoubtedly much stronger than it was in the past." [emphasis in original]

To begin, one is struck with how Eurocommunism, which had just been described as the latest stage in the "gradual social democratization" of the CPs, suddenly gets reduced to mere "tactical turns" adopted to "overcome a specific obstacle to reaching voters." But most astounding is how Mandel flatly denies that the Eurocommunists' criticism of Soviet bureaucratism and repression of dissidents has anything to do with their enthusing over "pluralistic democracy."

Berlinguer, Marchais and Carrillo are not such parliamentary cretins to really believe that their gaining entry into the government simply requires an electoral bootstrap operation. Berlinguer doesn't need to back the Charter 77 group in Czechoslovakia to hold his working-class constituency. He does so to gain the votes, as it were, of the Christian Democratic leadership, the Vatican hierarchy, the Italian general staff and last but not least the U.S. State Department and Pentagon.

Social democrats and liberals always talk about the "democratization" of Soviet society, a soft formulation of the call for capitalist restoration in the USSR. Does this mean that Willy Brandt or George McGovern are responding to the "anti-bureaucratic components of the average consciousness of the combative layers of workers"? Even at the height of the Cold War no American leader—not Truman, not Eisenhower, not Dulles—openly advocated reestablishing the "free enterprise system" in Stalinist Russia. The popular ideological slogans of imperialist anti-Sovietism have *always* been "democracy versus dictatorship," "the free world versus totalitarianism," "human rights versus police state repression."

The hostility toward the USSR among American, West German or British workers is not based on positive loyalty to the capitalist economic system, on a desire to see General Motors, Siemens or Imperial Chemical take over Russian industry. The anti-Soviet attitude of social-democratic workers in Western Europe and the more backward



Karl Kautsky: formally to the left of both the Euro-Communists and the USec on key question of whether socialists can make electoral blocs with the class enemy.

workers in the U.S. in part derives from the belief that parliamentary democracy is better than the Kremlin's dictatorial regime and in part from nationalist ideology. Everyone, except a few right-wing neanderthals, knows that the West European working classes can only be rallied behind NATO against the Soviet Union in the name of "socialist democracy," now including its Eurocommunist version.

A Basket Full of Dissidents

If Portugal forced the West European CPs to choose between Kremlin-loyalism and social democracy, then the August 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe provided the concrete link between Eurocommunism, U.S. imperialism and the Soviet dissidents. Especially important in this regard was the so-called "Basket Three" agreement, the pledge of various

continued on next page

democratic rights (free movement of ideas, information, persons) which U.S. imperialism extracted from the Kremlin in return for formally recognizing the latter's sphere of influence in East Europe.

American policymakers like Kissinger had a dual purpose in pressuring the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy to commit itself to "Basket Three." Since the Kremlin would obviously not carry out "Basket Three," the U.S. could exploit this in mobilizing "democratic" public opinion for its drive to ultimately reconquer the USSR for capitalism.

Secondly, Washington strategists hoped (though probably didn't expect) that "Basket Three" would would encourage the development of a pro-Western oppositional movement in the USSR, composed of types like Andrei Sakharov. In fact, U.S. imperialism did succeed in establishing the organizational framework for the mainstream soviet dissident movement in the form of the Helsinki monitoring groups.

Especially because the Soviet government signed the Helsinki Accords as a symbol of détente, the West European CPs' willingness to criticize Soviet violations of "Basket Three" freedoms became a key imperialist yardstick for measuring their independence from Moscow. Most of the prominent Soviet dissidents whom the Eurocommunists defend are involved in the Helsinki monitoring groups. In one sense the Italian, French and Spanish CPs have become Helsinki monitoring groups for the Helsinki monitoring groups.

The Helsinki Accords, linking détente to bourgeois-democratic rights, shaped the very terminology of Eurocommunism. Thus, the November 1975 PCI/PCF statement of principles repeats in large measure the "Basket Three" agreement. The document coming out of the June 1976 East Berlin conference of European Communist parties, essentially a concession by the Kremlin to the Eurocommunists, reads very much like the Helsinki Accords, a paean to détente.

Eurocommunist spokesmen constantly link their criticisms of the Kremlin to professions of loyalty to their own and to other "democratic" imperialist states. For example, in a famous interview with *Corriere della Sera* in 1976 Berlinguer explicitly linked his opposition to Kremlin repression, in particular its invasion of Czechoslovakia, to his desire to build a "socialism with a human face" under the aegis of NATO. Asked whether "socialism with freedom is more achievable in the Western system than in the Eastern one," Berlinguer replied quite bluntly: "Yes,

certainly, the Western system offers fewer constraints" (*Italian Communist*, April-July 1976).

In 1977 when the PCF changed its line and came out for a French independent "nuclear deterrent," Marchais reasserted his Eurocommunist independence of Soviet Russia: "If there were aggression against France by the Soviet Union, which is unthinkable, we would be the first to defend the national territory" (*New York Times*, 24 September 1977). Does Mandel believe that Marchais' statement of anti-Soviet French-defensism is "a concession to the anti-bureaucratic components of the average consciousness of the combative layers of workers"? We don't

know, for in the 200 pages of *From Stalinism to Eurocommunism* this well-known statement by Marchais is not mentioned, nor are similar embarrassing (for Mandel) statements by other Eurocommunist leaders.

Carrillo, in particular embarrassing (for way to laud Carter's "human rights" campaign. When the PCE was legalized in April 1977, Carrillo attributed this to the moral influence of Carter's "human rights" campaign. And again, when Mr. Eurocommunism visited the U.S. in the fall of 1977, he thanked Carter for his right to speak freely in America, obviously

implying a contrast with his treatment in Russia. After crossing a campus workers picket line Carrillo began a speech at Yale University: "If I'm speaking here today, it is essentially due to the human rights policies of president Carter which made possible this visit" (quoted in *L'Espresso*, 27 November 1977).

But undoubtedly the most striking instance of Eurocommunist support to Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign was the Shcharansky case last July. Unlike the Soviet dissidents Yuri Orlov and Aleksander Ginzburg, who were tried at the same time, Anatoly Shcharansky actually was guilty of a crime against the military defense of the Soviet Union. He gave information about secret military research to an American journalist connected with Pentagon intelligence agencies (a fact subsequently admitted by the Pentagon and the liberal media).

Carter chose to make the Soviet prosecution of Shcharansky a *casus belli* in his renewed Cold War offensive. The West European CPs duly took their cue from Washington. The PCI protested the prosecution of Shcharansky on the front page of *L'Unità*. But Marchais went even further. In a mass demonstration in Paris, French Communist leaders marched arm-in-arm with



Finlayson/Fortune

Eurocommunists appease NATO hoping to avoid the fate of Dubček.

Avital Shcharansky, an extreme right-wing Zionist associated with the fanatical, fascistic *Gush Emunim* sect in Israel. At this demonstration a Soviet flag was burned and among the slogans carried was "Hitler, Stalin, Brezhnev, the Same Struggle." PCF central committee member Henri Fiszbín explained his party's participation in this anti-Soviet demonstration as a "reaffirmation of our passionate attachment to democracy, not only in France but anywhere in the world" (*Le Monde*, 13 July 1978).

If Mandel portrays the Eurocommunist defense of Soviet bloc dissidents as progressive, it is because he would have us believe that all oppositional movements in the Soviet bloc are progressive, forces for political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy:

"The political conflict in the USSR and the People's Democracies pits the bureaucracy against the toiling masses and not against the imperialist bourgeoisie. When the Eurocommunist leaders commit themselves (insufficiently) against the bureaucracy in this struggle, they place themselves on the side of the masses and not on the side of imperialism."

Is the reactionary religious fanatic Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, who denounces the American people for not destroying North Vietnam, then a legitimate spokesman for "the toiling masses against the bureaucracy"? What about the liberal cold warrior Andrei Sakharov, who calls for U.S. economic blackmail against the Soviet Union? Or the Zionist Vladimir Slepak, who sought to organize the large-scale emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel?

It is empirically indisputable that the mainstream Soviet dissidents look to Western imperialism as a champion of their cause. As previously noted, most of the Soviet dissidents defended by the West European CPs were involved in the Helsinki monitoring groups. In its documents written for internal consumption the USec concedes that the opposition to Stalinist bureaucratic rule in the Soviet bloc contains reactionary elements. Yet the USec explicitly denies that even the pro-imperialist dissidents represent a current that poses a danger to the gains of the collectivized economies of these states. According to the draft resolution which the Mandelites have drawn up for their "Eleventh World Congress,"

"The predominant feature of the emerging opposition movements in Eastern Europe and the USSR is their

commitment to civil liberties. They have been marked by a diverse political composition and the inclusion of nonsocialist and non-working-class ideologies....

"While a restoration of capitalism is still possible in these countries, the motive forces for such a restoration are not to be found among anti-socialist ideologists inside the civil rights movement, but primarily in the ingrained aggressiveness of international capitalism and the imperialist powers....

"Anything that fosters a rise in working-class self-organization, self-confidence, and ability to develop independent political action, helps tip the scales in favor of political revolution and proletarian democracy—not restoration of capitalism."

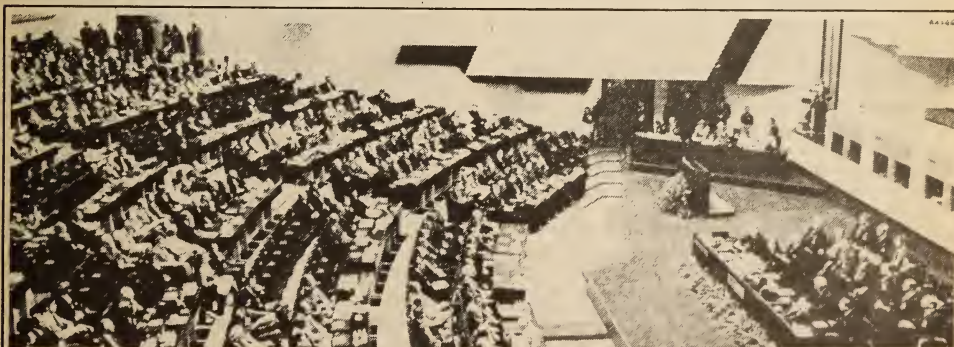
—"The World Political Situation and the Tasks of the Fourth International," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. XV, No. 5, July 1978

In other words, the "nonsocialist and anti-working-class" elements in the dissident movement are allegedly insignificant both numerically and in their relation to world imperialism. And, to the extent that they are able to carry out their program, these elements end up objectively serving the proletariat.

If taken seriously, such positions imply a fundamental revision of the Trotskyist theory of Stalinism. First, to believe that the possibility of capitalist restoration has been completely eradicated within the boundaries of the Soviet Union and that the only threat to the gains of the October Revolution comes from, in the words of Mandel, "ingrained aggressiveness of international capitalism and the imperialist powers" is to embrace precisely the *Stalinist* dogma of "socialism in one country." Under the cloak of "anti-Stalinism" the Pabloist position actually rejects Trotsky's indictment of the Stalinist bureaucracy based on its contradictory role. On the one hand, the bureaucracy rests on the social gains of the October Revolution; on the other, Stalinist bureaucratic rule preserves and even engenders forces within the degenerated and deformed workers states that pose a threat to the social conquests of the property transformations.

Mandel passes in silence over the only real mass organization in the Soviet bloc that presently stands outside the control of the bureaucracy and constitutes a potential threat to it: the church. Mandel can smugly dismiss the ravings of a Solzhenitsyn, but the reactionary

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Nogues/Sygma

Helsinki Summit, 1975: USec paeans to "socialist democracy" echo "Basket Three" concessions which U.S. imperialism wrung from the USSR.

"Fragile Unity" in German USec

Where Pabloism Has Led the GIM

The leaflet translated and reproduced below was distributed last spring by the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands to a conference of the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten, German section of the United Secretariat (GIM). As one of the smaller and more provincial of the European sections of the United Secretariat (USec), the GIM has often been peripheral in the international clique/faction fights of the USec. Some aspects of the history of the GIM mentioned in this leaflet therefore require identification and explanation.

In 1951-52 a Yugoslav-financed liberal Stalinist party, the UAP (Independent Workers Party), was formed in West Germany. Responding to the international Pabloist euphoria over Tito, the German section entered this formation, which briefly enjoyed rapid growth. But with Tito's rapprochement with Western imperialist powers around the Korean War, Yugoslav funding for the UAP ended—and the "party" experienced a quick and ignoble end. The German Pabloists under the leadership of Georg Junglas then submerged for nearly two decades into the rightward-moving German social democracy.

Deep entrist in the SPD, the USec "German section"

(which had no official name) scarcely intervened in the youth radicalization of the late 1960's. By 1968-69 the official USec section had reversed its orientation in order to tail the student movement and had developed a strategic perspective based on the supposed revolutionary potential of the "red university." During this period *Was Tun* (which is now the central organ of the GIM) was published as the would-be journal of the West German APO (Extra-Parliamentary Opposition, the name by which the German New Left referred to itself). A deep split occurred with much of the youth leaving to publicly establish the Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands (IKD) in 1970. The split was in a leftward direction but was partial and essentially an empirical rejection of the Pabloist policies. Several other splits quickly fragmented the IKD leading to the existence in Germany of unstable and competing left-centrist groupings which claimed to be anti-Pabloist. Liquidation in the Social Democracy and equally unfruitful submergence in the New Left have thus dominated the history of the German Pabloists.

The dominant clique in the GIM, centered now on Winfried Wolf, has remained in the direct continuity of this

For a Trotskyist Perspective!

It's no secret that the GIM is in a crisis. Largely liquidated public work, the turnover in membership, a dwindling press run of *Was Tun*, boycotting their own policies and fighting out of differences outside the organization are only surface manifestations of a general stagnation.

The crisis of the GIM is political. It is the product of Pabloist methodology—seeking a substitute for the Leninist-Trotskyist party, which as a cadre party must be built: "from the top down" on a firm programmatic basis and rooted in the working class. Instead, the GIM tries to find some other, "quicker" way to gain mass influence. It searches for "new vanguards" which will spontaneously come to revolutionary insights and into which the GIM can integrate itself in order to give them the last little push to the left: in short, those "unconscious Trotskyists" whom the Pabloists have been trying to find in all parts of the world for a quarter of a century now.

The path of the German section/GIM has led through the Titoist UAP and more than 15 years of "integrationist entrist" within the SPD right up to the "new mass vanguard"/"new workers vanguard"—only to one blind alley after another, to the destruction of cadres, demoralization and cynicism.

In the draft [USec] document, "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe" [1972], Mandel predicted "the decisive battles" in about "four or

five years." Today this perspective, which was based on the "new vanguard," has been proven to be the wrong track—just like Maitan's remark in 1968 that "the International will be built around Bolivia" and his confidence a year later that the next [USec] world congress might indeed be held in the seat of power in La Paz. In the late sixties the GIM failed to intervene with a revolutionary program and instead tailed after and sought to be "part" of the movement. Now the GIM has been left sitting high and dry after the APO-swamp dried up in resignation and adaptationism.

The old "new mass vanguard" is dead. There has to be a new substitute for the party: will the "Socialist Weekly" conjure it up? Or *Socialist Trade-Union Politics*? Or the famous factory work of the "Faction"?

The sundry tendencies/factions/swamps of the GIM are searching for their vanguards in seemingly counterposed quarters. There's no real right/left polarization, however. The dominant clique around Winfried Wolf sees its prospects in a quasi-entrist orientation toward a left social-democratic milieu that's moving to the right (SB, SOAG, etc.), spiced up with a few cynical, burnt-out ex-Spartacusbunders and anti-AKW [nuclear power] freaks as a field for mass intervention. The projections for a "Socialist Weekly," the "socialist alternative" to fill "the political vacuum to the left of the SPD," the "movement" for a "fourth party"—all this is simply a warmed-over version of the [old orientation toward the] "new mass vanguard," which now has become older, flabbier, more hostile to communists. It's obvious that the model is the *Socialist Challenge* of the IMG. We applaud [IMG leader] Tariq Ali's candor when he stated: "We of the IMG

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past, looking for some part of the New Left or social-democratic left to tail. In recent years these aspirations have been directed toward the Socialist Bureau, a left-reformist grouping on the SPD periphery with some influence among trade unionists and in the intellectual milieu around Frankfurt, as well as toward left-talking groups in the SPD youth.

On the other hand, oppositionists have pushed some variation of a narrow workist orientation against the petty-bourgeois leadership. Around the "Tenth World Congress" of the USec (February 1974) the Kompass Tendency (German component of the international Third Tendency whose most prominent international figure was the Italian Roberto Massari) called for an orientation to the working class, embraced the American Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) legalist rejection of the majority's pro-guerrillaism and impressionistically characterized the SPD as a "bourgeois party." In late 1974, however, the majority of the Kompass dissolved into a bloc with the Wolf clique to form the new GIM majority.

More recently, the Proletarian Faction has emerged as the main organized opposition to the GIM leadership. The ProFra orients to the most backward layers of the proletariat and calls for liquidating Was Tun in favor of an even less political journal which will supposedly appeal to the workers. The ProFra, which views the SPD as purely bourgeois and the trade unions as hopelessly bureaucratic, is an extreme syndicalist tendency which has abandoned

even the pretence of carrying programmatic politics (let alone Trotskyist politics) to the proletariat. The Zwischen-sumpf (literally: Intermediate Swamp), as the name implies, wavers between the other two tendencies, calling for more trade-union work and defending the extreme federalism produced by the GIM's extended political crisis. The pro-SWP tendency in the GIM has been traditionally small.

The Wolf group is currently seeking to emulate the British IMG's (International Marxist Group, British section of the USec) Socialist Unity hodgepodge, attempting to launch a "socialist weekly" as a centrist/left-reformist propaganda front with the Socialist Bureau and left social democrats—while simultaneously capitulating to the "Green" environmentalists, whom they "critically" supported in recent elections in both Hamburg and Hesse. The leadership group has also produced a token issue of a trade-union oriented journal with a minimal program, Sozialistische Arbeiterpolitik, in an attempt to undercut ProFra criticism.

Since the TLD leaflet was distributed the GIM has held its national conference. Its only "achievement" was the bureaucratic expulsion of a comrade who alone had waged a principled opposition to all the unprincipled cliques and swamps in the GIM.

Trotskyistische Liga Deutschlands
January 1979

"The GIM Has Not Yet Fallen Apart"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reprinted below is a resolution that the Central Committee of the GIM adopted unanimously (with one abstention) on 9 July 1978. The document is translated from a recent GIM internal bulletin (OIB No. 151, 20 July 1978). It quite graphically reveals just how deep the German Pabloist organization has sunk into the mud at the bottom of the latter-day Menshevik swamp. Here the cynical leaders of the GIM call upon the USec to appoint "a person generally regarded with trust" (a tall order indeed!) to play a bonapartist role in keeping the squabbling factions/cliques/swamps of the GIM together in some semblance of a national organization. A classic case of the cure being no better than the illness!

CALL FOR UNIFYING THE ORGANIZATION

Despite at times violent political conflicts the GIM has not yet fallen apart. While this fragile unity may rest on the realization that left to their own resources splinter groupings cannot arrive at any political perspective for the long run, nonetheless the fundamental common basis that still exists must be underlined. It consists of the following points:

Membership in the Fourth International, defense of its theory and program

Evaluation of the state of capitalism as a whole and of West German capitalism in particular

A conception of the GIM as a revolutionary organization overwhelmingly not anchored in the working class, an organization which must prepare a revolutionary mass party and which currently faces the task of transforming itself from a group whose main activity is propagandistic into one which creates a base for itself. The members and sympathizers must be trained for work in mass movements, in particular in the working masses. Agreement on the necessity of working out a concrete program for revolutionary politics in the BRD.

Abandoning the orientation toward the left-radical camp and a turn toward centrist currents.

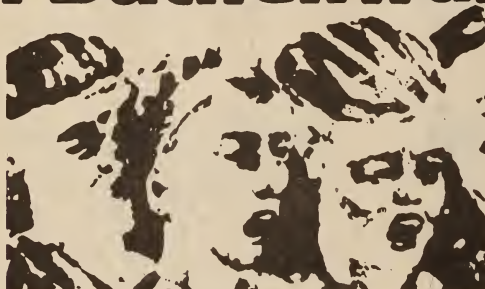
The extant differences of opinion are of a tactical and not of a principled nature. Were it otherwise, then the GIM would be an unprincipled bloc: its falling apart would then liberate its parts from the need for crippling concessions to one another. The most important differences are:

All currents call for primary orientation toward factory work. But large parts of the organization do not put this abstract credo into practice, either because they do not take this task seriously enough, or see only limited practical possibilities at present or in the short run consider other tasks more important. The evaluation of the trade unions and various questions of tactics in the plants have been sharply disputed. This is also true of political initiatives aimed at the factories and trade unions, such as the Aktionskreis Leben [Quality of Life Action Groups]. While the decision on this question was adopted unanimously in the CC, only parts of the organization have carried it out.

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From the Archives of Trotskyism

Declaration of the Internationalist Communists of Buchenwald



Above:
"Workers Song"; detail of a drawing done in Buchenwald.

It is with great satisfaction that we publish for the first time in English this moving and historically important document. The "Declaration of the Internationalist Communists of Buchenwald" is a programmatic manifesto by cadres and sympathizers of the Trotskyist movement who survived the Nazi concentration camp.

Neither fascist torture nor Stalinist persecution broke these comrades' political courage.

Originally written in German, the declaration was issued a little more than a week after Buchenwald was liberated in April 1945. Its third section was printed in a 1946 issue of *Neuer Spartakus*, the first German-language Trotskyist press published after the war. This part of the document was reprinted in October 1974 in *Die Internationale*, journal of the West German Pabloists. More recently, two different French translations of the full text have been published. One appeared in the *Bulletin* (No. 10) of the Centre d'Etudes et de

Recherches sur les Mouvements Trotskyste et Révolutionnaires Internationaux (CERMTRI); the second in *Critique Communiste* (No. 25, November 1978), journal of the French Pabloists. Our translation is from the original German text, which was obtained from the CERMTRI archives in Paris. This introduction is largely based on the prefaces to the text which appeared in the CERMTRI *Bulletin* and *Critique Communiste*.

The "Declaration of the Internationalist Communists of Buchenwald" was the collaborative work of four comrades: the two Austrians Ernst Federn and Karl Fischer, Marcel Beaufrère and Florent Galloy, French and Belgian Trotskyists respectively. Like many other German and Austrian Trotskyists, Federn and Fischer were seized by the Nazis even before the outbreak of the second imperialist war. Both were first arrested for their revolutionary activities in Austria in 1935. Federn was released but Fischer and other Austrian Trotskyists were imprisoned and tried in Vienna in 1937. Sentenced to five years' imprisonment, they were released in the amnesty decreed on the eve of the German annexation of Austria in February 1938 and escaped to Belgium and later to France. Federn was arrested again in 1938, sent to the Nazi camp at Dachau and later moved to Buchenwald.

Many of the Trotskyist cadres who were to join Federn at Buchenwald spent the first years of the war clandestinely organizing among German workers and soldiers under the Nazi occupation. Their internationalist struggle made the scattered Trotskyist cells the

target of not only the Gestapo but also the Stalinists.

Marcel Beaufrère was typical of those Trotskyist militants whose clandestine work was punished by the Nazis with imprisonment in the death camps. In and out of prison since 1939, when he had first been arrested for "provoking disobedience in the army," Beaufrère worked closely with Marcel Hic, who had succeeded in regularly publishing *La Vérité* right under the Nazis' noses. In September 1943 Beaufrère was assigned to head up the Trotskyist cell in Brittany, where the underground paper *Arbeiter und Soldat* was printed and distributed among the German armed forces. Despite fierce repression (in October 1943 the Gestapo caught and shot some 65 members of the cell, including 30 German soldiers and sailors), Trotskyist propaganda in German continued to be produced in great quantity (with press runs as high as 10,000 copies) and disseminated as late as August 1944. Beaufrère was finally arrested in October 1943, tortured and then sent to Buchenwald.

Many of the Trotskyist militants active in this work did not live to read the document produced by the Buchenwald comrades. Marcel Hic survived Buchenwald only to perish at Dora in 1944. Robert Cruau, the 23-year-old militant who headed the Trotskyist cell in the Wehrmacht at Brest, was arrested in 1943 and, according to the *Critique Communiste* introduction by Rodolphe Prager:

"A little after his arrest Robert Cruau faked an escape in order to get himself killed. He wanted to be certain not to talk and he was the primary target of the interrogators."

And Abram Leon, gifted author of the still definitive Marxist work on the Jewish question and leader of the Belgian Trotskyist cell in the Wehrmacht, was arrested in June 1944 when he arrived in the Charleroi region to assume control of the clandestine work among the miners, which covered some 15 mines and included publication of *Le Réveil des Mineurs*. Tortured by the Gestapo, Leon was exterminated in a gas chamber at Auschwitz at the age of 26.

Despite the Nazi terror, the Trotskyists in the concentration camps sought to continue fighting for their revolutionary program. Several accounts testify to the heroism and courage of the Trotskyist cell at Buchenwald. According to an interview which Beaufrère gave to an iSt representative in January 1979, when the Nazis were preparing to abandon Buchenwald to the approaching Allied forces, the camp commandants broadcast over the loudspeaker system an order for the prisoners to assemble. Recognizing that a final round-up and execution of the Jewish inmates were very likely in the offing, Beaufrère and his comrades immediately began to urge the inmates not to report for the assembly and to get the political prisoners to give their identifying red emblems to the Jews, who were forced to wear yellow stars on their uniforms. An almost certain mass slaughter of Jews (and perhaps communists as well) was thus partially averted.

The political authority which the Internationalist Communists earned within the camp played no small role in their survival. As was the case at other Nazi camps, at Buchenwald the Trotskyists lived under the constant threat of assassination by the Stalinists, who in most cases controlled the clandestine military apparatuses formed in some camps. According to the interview with Beaufrère, the French Stalinist cell at Buchenwald recognized him as a Trotskyist upon his arrival in January 1944 and vowed to kill him. Elsewhere, Trotskyists were indeed murdered by the Stalinists—for example, Pietro Tresso (Blasco), a leader of the clandestine Trotskyist organization (the PCI), "disappeared" after a Stalinist-organized raid freed some 80 resistance fighters from Puy, a Nazi camp in France. At Buchenwald the French Stalinists used their administrative positions as trustees to assign Beaufrère to a task that would almost certainly lead to his death. Beaufrère was saved from this "death warrant" by the active solidarity of the German and Czech Stalinist cells, eventually also gaining the support of the other cells (which were organized along national lines), including the Russian group.

What enabled Beaufrère to gain the sympathy and respect of these Stalinist cadres was in no small measure the anti-chauvinist stand of the Trotskyists. Evidently many of the German and Austrian Stalinists were repelled by the anti-German chauvinism of their French CP "comrades." (At the time of the Allied "liberation" of France *L'Humanité* ran headlines such as "Everybody Get a Kraut!")

After his arrival in Paris in 1945, Beaufrère recounted for the French Trotskyist press

continued on next page



Marcel Beaufrère



Ernest Federn

the impact of the Buchenwald declaration on the German Stalinists:

"Some old German Communists came to find our Trotskyist comrades [in Buchenwald]. Beaufrière recounted on his return to Paris, and said to them, the hour has come, you must publicly show yourselves, and they asked for a preliminary political discussion. A text of our German comrades which declared us in favor of a soviet German republic had a profound impact on the german Communist comrades, who asked to keep in touch with the Trotskyists."
—*La Vérité*, 11 May 1945, quoted in *Critique Communiste*, November 1978

The Buchenwald declaration is not without its weaknesses. From the standpoint of Trotskyism the manifesto contains formulations on the questions of the USSR and the Fourth International that are fuzzy if not simply ambiguous. Thus, while the Soviet bureaucracy is referred to as a caste, the declaration avoids characterizing the USSR as a degenerated workers state. It quite explicitly puts a question mark over the future evolution of the regime and nowhere calls for the unconditional military defense of the USSR.

Likewise, while "IV International" appears at the end of the document in parentheses, the Fourth International and Trotskyism are not mentioned in the text. Rather, the declaration states that "a new world revolutionary party" remains to be created.

These were not hasty formulations but the result of much discussion. Beaufrière and Fischer held widely divergent positions on the class character of the USSR and on the Fourth International. Even before the war, Fischer had adopted a "state capitalism" analysis of the USSR and his group had grown increasingly aloof from the Fourth International.

The Buchenwald declaration represented a compromise. Karl Fisher explained in a 29 May 1946 letter to his comrades in Paris.

"It was composed jointly by Federn, Marcel Beaufrière, Florent Galloy and me. In regard to Russia and the Trotskyists I had to enter into a compromise, otherwise nothing at all would have come out."

—quoted in *Bulletin of the CERMTRI*, No. 10

It should also be noted that the Declaration rather categorically predicts the imminent eruption of major inter-imperialist rivalry between the U.S. and Britain. Such a projection, of course, was very soon revealed to be false. However, the issues involved were not new; in the mid-1920's Trotsky already analyzed the bases for future Anglo-American inter-imperialist rivalries. But at the close of World War II the U.S. was clearly emerging as the hegemonic imperialist power.

Even with these weaknesses, the Buchenwald declaration on balance is a principled and powerful statement of revolutionary internationalism, an affirmation of revolutionary optimism in the capacity of the communist vanguard to lead the resurgent proletariat out of its crisis of leadership and toward the conquest of power.

* * * * *

I. The International Conjunction of Capitalism

In the wake of the second imperialist war Italy, Germany and Japan have lost their status as great imperialist powers, while that of France has been severely undermined.

The imperialist antagonisms and conflicts between the USA and Great Britain dominate the conjunction of world imperialist politics.

At the beginning of this world war Russia emerged from its isolation and today confronts the task of politically and economically consolidating its military successes in opposition to the appetites of the victorious imperialist powers.

Despite its enormous efforts China remains a pawn of the great imperialist powers, an inevitable consequence of the victory of the Chinese bourgeoisie over the Chinese proletariat.

The unanimity so ostentatiously displayed at the international imperialist peace conferences is intended to dupe the masses by concealing the antagonisms inherent among the capitalist powers. However, coinciding military interests vis-à-vis Germany cannot prevent the explosion of the antagonisms in the Allied camp. To these antagonisms must



Above:
Trotskyist press in
France appealed to
the ranks of the Ger-
man army on a
proletarian-
internationalist
basis

be added the inevitable crises and the social tumult of the decaying capitalist mode of production.

A precise analysis of the international situation using the methods of Marxism-Leninism is the indispensable precondition for a successful revolutionary line.

II. The International Situation of the Working Class

This development renders it possible for the German proletariat to rapidly recover from its profound defeat and to again place itself at the head of the European working class in the battle for the overthrow of capitalism. Isolated by the failure of the revolution in Europe, the Russian revolution has taken a course which has led it further and further away from the interests of the European and international proletariat. The policy of "socialism in one country," at first just a defense of the interests of the ruling bureaucratic clique, today leads the Russian state to carry out a nationalistic policy shoulder to shoulder with the imperialist powers. Whatever the course of events in Russia may be, the international proletariat must cast off all illusions regarding this state and with the aid of a clear Marxist analysis realize that the presently ruling bureaucratic and military caste defends exclusively its own interests and that the international revolution cannot count on any support from this government.

The total military, political and economic collapse of the German bourgeoisie opens the road to liberation for the German proletariat. To prevent the restabilization of the German bourgeoisie, facilitated by imperialist antagonisms, and to establish workers power, the revolutionary struggle of the working class of each country against its own bourgeoisie is necessary. The working class was deprived of its revolutionary leadership by the politics of the two international workers organizations, which actively fought and sabotaged the proletarian revolution that alone could have prevented this war. The Second International is a tool of the bourgeoisie. Since the death of Lenin the Third International has been transformed into an agency of the foreign policy of the Russian bureaucracy. Both Internationals actively participated in the preparation and prosecution of this imperialist war and therefore share responsibility for it. To attribute responsibility, or partial responsibility, for this war to the German and international working class is only another way of continuing to serve the bourgeoisie.

The proletariat can fulfill its historic task only under the leadership of a new world revolutionary party. The creation of this party is the most pressing task of the most advanced sections of the working class. International revolutionary cadres have already come together to construct this world party in the struggle against capitalism and its reformist and Stalinist agents. In order to carry out this difficult task there must be no avoiding the issue through the more conciliatory slogan of a new 2-1/2 International. Such an intermediary formation would prevent the necessary ideological clarification and would sap revolutionary will.

III. Never Again a 9 November 1918!

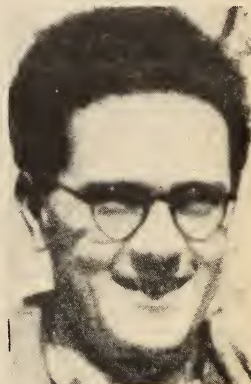
In the imminent pre-revolutionary period what is necessary is to mobilize the working masses in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and to prepare the construction of a new revolutionary International that will forge the unity of the working class in revolutionary action.

All theories and illusions about a "peoples state" or a "peoples democracy" have led the working class to the bloodiest defeats in the course of class struggle in capitalist society. Only irreconcilable struggle against the capitalist state—up to and including its destruction and the construction of the state of workers and peasants councils—can prevent similar new defeats. The bourgeoisie and the uprooted petty bourgeoisie brought fascism to power. Fascism is the creation of capitalism. Only the successful, independent action of the working class against capitalism is capable of eradicating the evil of fascism, along with its root causes. In this struggle the hesitant petty bourgeoisie will join forces with the revolutionary proletariat on the offensive, as the history of the great revolutions demonstrates.

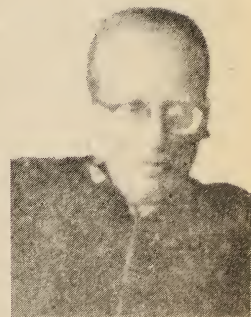
In order to emerge victorious from the class battles to come the German working class must struggle for the implementation of the following demands:

- Freedom of organization, assembly and the press!
- Freedom of collective action and the immediate restoration of all the pre-1933 social gains!
- Total elimination of all the fascist organizations!

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Marcel Hic



Karl Fischer

Trotskyist Perspective...

(continued from page 10)

consider ourselves to be neither a revolutionary party nor the nucleus of the revolutionary party" (*Was Tun* No. 189). That statement is correct and quite applicable to the GIM.

Well, how does someone with these political appetites evaluate the relative electoral success of the Bunte Liste and the Grüne Liste [the Colored and Green Tickets: the slates of eco-politicos who ran in the last state elections in West Germany]? A tricky question! Perhaps the Bunte Liste might be the "socialist alternative"?—even though the "Socialist Alternative" [the abortive electoral rotten bloc of fake lefts which the GIM attempted to broker] originally had been projected as an alternative to the Bunte Liste. Indeed, the initial reaction of many GIM comrades to the shameless class-collaborationism of the KB [Communist League, "Gang of Five"] Stalinists who uncritically promoted the Colored and Green Tickets] was impotent disgust, and early on one could even hear terms like "mini popular front." Yet when the hour of truth—election day—approached, GIM members and sympathizers were told that they were free to vote for the Bunte Liste. And after the elections Anna Armand testified that, for "herself" anyway, the old "Pabloist reflex," drilled-in for decades, was still working as fast as ever: "Tail 'em!" How 'bout a *Bunte Weekly*, then? Nope, there's already one, and with 64 pages to boot, even if it comes out only bi-weekly [namely, the *Arbeiterkampf* of the Communist League]. Our suggestion: why not just add to the [GIM] masthead the missing but well-recognized question mark: *Was Tun?* [*What Is To Be Done?*].

The "Proletarian Faction" [ProFra] is anything but a left opposition. It only buries itself in liquidation into the "virginal" proletariat and throws overboard any claim to fighting for a communist program. The ProFra has simply focused its impressionism on a different "sector of intervention": the factory. ProFra might believe that it's doing something new, but the liquidationist politics of Pabloism have not always been predominantly student oriented. For example, the entry into the Italian CP (where [USec chief] Maitan's group disappeared politically and organizationally for 20 years) wasn't dissolution into a *socialistically* petty-bourgeois milieu. And finally, when Mandel helped sell out the Belgian general strike of 1960-61, he had the support of his section, consisting in its majority of "tested trade unionists." Since ProFra has no intention of fighting for a revolutionary program in the factories, it is only one more barrier to the development of class consciousness within the proletariat.

Both—the "majority" and the "faction" alike—are in complete agreement on one thing: that the Transitional Program has no relevance whatsoever for factory and trade-union work. One need only compare "Our Principles" in the unnumbered initial issue of *Sozialistische Gewerkschaftspolitik* [*Socialist Trade-Union Politics*] with the "let's-get-going" platform for Degussa [a chemical plant near Frankfurt]: not a trace of even an oh-so-watered-down version of a program of transitional demands. And these brotherly enemies agree on still another issue: like Mandel they are ready at any time to drop the "label of the Fourth International" within "24 hours."

The "Intermediate Swamp," so appropriately self-named, is nothing but the crystallization of disgruntlement without any perspective. It neither wishes nor is able to be an alternative to the GIM leadership. It doesn't want to take responsibility for the organization, and its oppositional stance is merely an excuse for pursuing parochial local "arena work." It "struggles" (if at all) only to maintain the circle spirit within the GIM. Subjectively revolutionary elements will not find any alternative in this collection of local cliques. The "Intermediate Swamp" is the result of the bankruptcy of the international Third Tendency at the time of the [USec] Tenth Congress, of the necessarily unsuccessful attempt to construct an international tendency between Pabloism and Trotskyism. The bloc, "in principle" unprincipled, in the GIM between the KT [Kompass Tendency] and the part of the IT [Internationalist Tendency of the Mandelites] around Winfried Wolf and Hülseberg in 1975 marked this development and was the beginning of the present crisis.

The Two-and-One-Quarter International

What is still holding the GIM together as a federated bloc, albeit with difficulty, is the at most ornamental label, "Fourth International," and the vague claim to Trotskyism. Yet the USec is just as heterogeneous and rotten as the GIM, having long ago given up the attempt to struggle internationally for a unified political conception. In our article, "Forward to the 21st International" (*Kommunistische Korrespondenz* No. 21) we gave extensive examples to demonstrate that the present threadbare unity between the centrist Majority (Mandel, Krivine, Tariq Ali & Co.) and the reformist SWP above all depends on the current absence of divisive international issues that would cause the various factions to clash, as occurred over Portugal and Angola in 1974-75. SWP leader Barry Sheppard's subsequent admission that "at one point" USec supporters in Portugal "would have been on opposite sides of some actual barricades" only shows how the rapprochement between the erstwhile opponents depends on a gentlemen's agreement not to discuss which side of the barricades was the right one at that time.

And the same is true of just about every other issue where Mandel and Hansen at one time used their theoretical knowledge to scourge the other's particularly gross betrayals with pseudo-orthodox arguments. Until recently

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considered reformist even by many supporters of the IMT and KT, the SWP has once again won acclaim from its onetime critics on the basis of its new orientation toward trade-union work. But trade-union work without revolutionary program and based on adaptation to left bureaucrats, such as friend-of-Carter Sadlowski, only means that the SWP is sending tendrils of its reformism into new terrain. (For a striking example of this see the article on the miners' strike in the new *KK* No. 22.)

For its part the SWP has conveniently forgotten its pseudocriticism of the Majority's "popular frontism," although the electoral support which the PB of the French LCR gave to Otelio (after the fact) and the GIM's call for support to the Bunte Liste are classic examples of capitulation to popular-frontist electoral blocs that make a program of class collaboration.

Forward to the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

The international Spartacist tendency (iSt) looks back on a 15-year-long history of struggle for Trotskyism. Our starting point was the struggle of the Revolutionary Tendency in the SWP against hailing Castro as an "unconscious Trotskyist" and for the necessity of con-

structing revolutionary parties in all countries of the world (including Cuba, China and Algeria). Our opposition to the guerrilla road was not the SWP's legalistic fear, expressed after the Ninth World Congress, of somehow being linked with "violence"; rather, it was the struggle for a *proletarian* perspective as opposed to guerrillaist substitutionalism. The iSt has succeeded in building fighting propaganda groups in half a dozen countries on three continents—parts of a democratic-centralist international tendency. The successes of SL/U.S.-supported trade-union caucuses among seamen, longshoremen and warehouse workers, auto and telephone workers, refute the cynics who maintain that to achieve success one must water down or completely abandon the Trotskyist program.

In Germany the TLD is struggling to overcome the decades-long break in the continuity of Trotskyist politics and to construct a party in the tradition of Lenin's Third and Trotsky's Fourth International!

Read the press of the international Spartacist tendency!

Break with centrism!

For the reforming of the Fourth International!

24 June 1978

Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands

Section of the international Spartacist tendency

GIM...

(continued from page 11)

Similarly disputed is the evaluation of the SPD.

The PB advocates initiatives toward centrist currents with the goal of intervening in the differentiation process to create a party left of the SPD. The Proletarian Faction on the other hand advocates the propaganda slogan "For the Creation of a Socialist Workers Party." On this question there are numerous intermediate positions. These orientations produce subordinate differences on propaganda, press policy, the distribution of resources, and the attitude to tactics in elections.

Long-term coexistence of these differences in a small organization like the GIM presents the acute danger of the organization's falling apart. For two years the GIM has been incapable of action on a national basis.

The most important criticisms at present are:

The national leadership lacks a sufficient political base in the GIM. It is unable to organize an exchange of information and experience in the GIM. Political initiatives are carried out only by parts of the organization. Hence the leadership has to limit itself to various service functions and propaganda work. The locals and cells are becoming independent. Isolated from one another, they are attempting to develop their own practice. This almost always leads to projects which have not sufficiently matured and are unsuccessful—and which are scarcely ever evaluated self-critically and honestly to boot. This SB-ization [Socialist Bureau-ization] must lead to the collapse of the organization. The principle of democratic centralism is already openly rejected in some spots and even more frequently ignored in practice. The national

leadership does not dare to insist on its implementation. The self-conception of the revolutionary organization is at stake. Discipline and political cohesiveness are dissolving.

The unavoidable lack of success and of perspectives in the isolated efforts to begin work heighten frustration and aggressiveness in internal discussion. Collapse looms in the loss of solidarity among the comrades.

A widespread criticism of the national leadership appeared at the June N[ational] C[onference]. In all probability the critics will be able to find support only from a minority in the future as well. But on the other hand no other grouping, coalition or political conception has appeared from which an alternative leadership could emerge. Hence it is as good as certain that the present up-in-the-air situation will continue, and the collapse of the organization will be hastened.

Hence self-preservation dictates attempting extraordinary efforts to unify the organization. This can be attained only via a common practice. To create the prerequisites for this the following is proposed:

1. To form a Working Group [*Arbeitskommission*] in which all political currents of the GIM will as far as possible cooperate, including those not represented in the CC. The VS [United Secretariat] is requested, with the agreement of the CC, to name a person generally regarded with trust to head up the Group and to work toward agreement.
2. The task of the Group will be to produce a detailed program for the GIM's work in the coming year, which as far as possible will not be open to "interpretation."
3. To appeal to parts of the GIM to take part in this attempt at unifying our practice, to work out suggestions for it, name representative delegates to the Working Group and to work with it in a spirit of compromise. ■

Euro-Revisionists Tail...

(continued from page 9)

influence of the Polish Catholic Church or East German Lutheran Church should not be so easy to ignore. One need only recall the reactionary role of the Catholic Church in the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The Pabloist priests who lull the vigilance of the East European working class regarding the threat of capitalist restorationist tendencies in their own countries should be blessed for their services by the new pope in the Vatican.

Despite the prevalence of muddle-headed liberalism and identification with imperialist "democracy" among the dissidents, we condemn the brutal terror, crushing censorship and ludicrous frame-ups endemic to Stalinist bureaucratic rule. It is the monstrous crimes of the Stalinist bureaucrats who drag the liberating goals of Marxism through the mud which have alienated a layer of the intelligentsia and turned them into bourgeois liberals, nationalists, Zionists and religious obscurantists. But to oust these parasitical bureaucratic castes and restore genuine workers democracy through proletarian political revolution requires that these tendencies be *politically defeated*.

Even a healthy workers state, if faced with economic backwardness and imperialist pressure, would not be free of reactionary oppositional movements, arising primarily from the petty bourgeoisie. However, a revolutionary regime would base its policy towards such elements on defending and extending the revolution. Given the exigencies imposed by the need to defend the proletarian dictatorship, a revolutionary workers government would be guided by the norm that all tendencies have the freedom of political expression except those who actively work for the overthrow of the socialist revolution. This implies the right of workers and petty-bourgeois elements to form *pro-socialist* political parties which would compete with the Bolshevik vanguard for influence in the soviets. While Stalinists can deal with dissidents only through terror, a revolutionary regime would have at its disposal a far more effective weapon: moral authority before the working

masses and the perspective of world revolution to destroy imperialism.

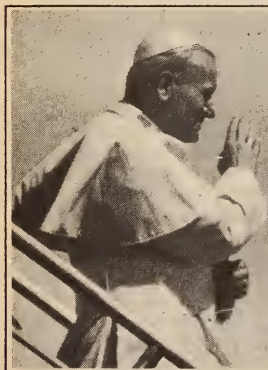
Workers Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

If significant capitalist-restorationist forces cannot emerge within the Soviet bloc, as Mandel implies, then there is no need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This conclusion, implicit in Mandel's book on Eurocommunism, is made explicit in a USec resolution misnamed "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and co-produced by the Mandeliste majority and the SWP (*Intercontinental Press*, 25 July 1977). It was the issues raised in this document which cemented the dissolution of factions in the USec. "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is an attempt to present the USec as the most democratic of "socialist democrats" with regard to Brezhnev's Russia.

Behind the abstract discussion of the democratic rights of pro-bourgeois parties under the dictatorship of the proletariat lurks the real question of the pro-Western dissident movement in the USSR today. World, especially American, imperialism has committed its great material resources and powerful ideological influence to a campaign for the democratic rights of the pro-Western dissident movement in the USSR, ultimately for their right to exercise governmental power. The USec's "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" is but the echo of Helsinki "Basket Three" and Carter's "Human Rights" campaign as refracted through the Eurocommunists with only one, completely stylistic, difference: the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is not openly abandoned, but instead filled with an entirely bourgeois-democratic content.

For Trotsky the restoration of soviet democracy for the working class was an integral part of restoring the USSR as a bastion of world revolution, and not just in the sense of moral inspiration. The USec document emphasizes not democracy for the workers but democracy for the bourgeoisie or, more precisely, for pro-bourgeois parties:

"But genuinely representative, democratically elected workers councils can exist only if the masses have the right to elect whomever they want without distinction, and without restrictive preconditions as to the ideological or political convictions of the elected delegates.... Any



While Mandel preaches his pabulum about Eurocommunism, the Polish Pope and U.S. imperialism aggressively

seek to increase their reactionary leverage in the Soviet Bloc countries.

Poland, in Bid for Loan, Will Let West's Banks Monitor Economy

By ANN CRITTENDEN

As part of an effort to obtain a major new loan, Poland has agreed to permit Western banks to monitor its economic policies, American bankers say. They regard the concession as a blow to the economies of non-Communist countries in financial distress. An initial meeting between Western bankers and Polish officials in Poland's eco-

restriction of party affiliation restricts the freedom of the proletariat to exercise political power, i.e., restricts workers democracy, which would be contrary both to our program and to the historical interests of the working class."

—*Intercontinental Press*, 25 July 1977

A later practice is even more explicit:

"This means that freedom of political organization should be granted to all those, including probourgeois elements, who in actual practice respect the constitution of the workers state, i.e., are not engaged in violent actions to overthrow workers power and collective property. The workers have no need to fear as a mortal danger propaganda that 'incites' them to give the factories and banks back to private owners. There is little chance that a majority of them will be 'persuaded' by propaganda of that type." [emphasis in original]

Just like the Eurocommunists, the Mandelites are eager to guarantee that bourgeois forces should have the right to restore capitalism if they can gain a democratic majority. But if bourgeois forces can come to power and restore capitalism through peaceful, legal soviet-constitutional means, one cannot speak of the *dictatorship* of the proletariat. For as Lenin so succinctly expressed it in his famous polemic against Kautsky:

"The indispensable characteristic, the necessary condition of dictatorship is the *forcible* suppression of the exploiters as a class, and, consequently, the *infringement* of 'pure democracy', i.e., of equality and freedom in regard to that class." [emphasis in original]

—*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918)

In a letter to G. Myasnikov dated 5 August 1921 Lenin made his position even more categorical:

"The bourgeoisie (all over the world) is still very much

stronger than we are. To place in its hands yet *another* weapon like freedom of political organization (freedom of the press, for the press is the core and foundation of political organization) means facilitating the enemy's task, means helping the class enemy.
"We have no wish to commit suicide, and therefore, we will not do this." [emphasis in original]

—*Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 505, Moscow (1973)

Predictably, the Mandelites have an escape clause stating that the rights of the bourgeois parties might have to be restricted in cases of civil war or war with imperialist powers:

"This is our programmatic and principled norm—unfettered political freedom for all those individuals, groups, tendencies, and parties who in practice respect collective property and the workers' constitution. This does not mean that these norms can be fully implemented irrespective of concrete circumstances. In the process of establishing and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, civil war or international military interventions have been and can be unleashed by the bourgeoisie. Under conditions of civil war or foreign military intervention, i.e., attempts by the former ruling classes to overthrow workers power by force, then the rules of war apply, and restrictions on the political activities of the bourgeoisie may well be called for."

—*Intercontinental Press*, 25 July 1977

Here the USec presents "attempts by the former ruling classes to overthrow workers power by force" as an *abnormal* situation during the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat is precisely a relatively brief historic period of violent conflict between the proletariat and bourgeoisie on an international scale; it is by its very nature an epoch of

continued on next page

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wars, civil wars and revolutions.

In the early 1950's, when the Pabloists saw in the Kremlin the main force of world revolution, they projected centuries of bureaucratically-deformed workers states. Now that they are tailing the Eurocommunists, the Pabloists project centuries of democratically-governed workers states, complete with an institutionalized bourgeois opposition. This new conception is, if anything, even more of a revision of Marxism than the earlier myth.

Just like the Eurocommunists, the Mandelites link democratic rights for bourgeois tendencies in the Soviet bloc to peaceful coexistence with imperialism. However, a Soviet Russian workers state should be a proletarian armed fortress of the world revolution. A political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy would bring not peaceful coexistence but the mobilization of the world proletariat against the imperialists. A revolutionary internationalist foreign policy would, however, involve certain short-term costs for the Soviet people. The level of military expenditure would have to remain fairly high, the imperialist countries would undoubtedly resort to economic blackmail, etc.

Under the pressure of imperialist encirclement, conciliatory and even defeatist tendencies are likely to emerge from the petty-bourgeois strata—intellectuals, peasants, artisans. Therein lies the deeper socio-political meaning of the present pro-Western Soviet dissident movement, which is *not* simply a wrongheaded reaction to bureaucratic oppression along the line of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

Andrei Sakharov, who was once a liberal Khrushchevite

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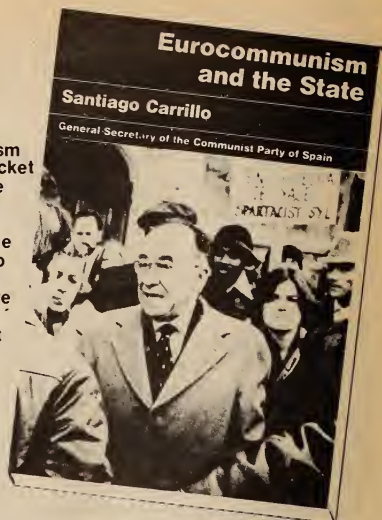
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Mr. Euro-Communist crosses picket line at Yale University to get a respectable platform to plead his case before U.S. imperialist policy-makers.



and top Kremlin adviser on nuclear policy, represents those elements in the Russian petty-bourgeois elite who have become Soviet defeatist with regard to imperialism. In a sense this most prominent Soviet dissident has taken the policy of "peaceful coexistence" to its logical conclusion: advocacy of the restoration of capitalism. Thus in 1973, before he fully became a pro-American cold warrior, Sakharov wrote:

"I have believed and believe now that the only real way to solve world problems is the movement of each side toward the other, the convergence of the capitalist and socialist systems accompanied by demilitarization, reinforcement of socialist protection for workers' rights, and creation of a mixed type of economy."

—Andrei D. Sakharov, *Sakharov Speaks*, edited by Harrison Salisbury (1974)

A revolutionary (Trotskyist) government in the Soviet Union would have to combat such defeatist tendencies toward imperialism arising from the petty-bourgeois strata. A future Trotskyist party in the USSR will certainly not overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy in order to then turn power over to the Helsinki monitoring groups.

How Mandel Rehabilitates Stalinists/ Eurocommunists

Mandel seeks to link Eurocommunism to the democratization of Stalinist Russia by calling upon West European CP leaders to demand that the Kremlin rehabilitate Trotsky and all the Bolshevik old guard. In his essay on the 1976 East Berlin Communist conference included in *From Stalinism to Eurocommunism* Mandel writes:

"They [the Eurocommunist leaders] should demand the public rehabilitation of Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rakovsky, and all the old Bolsheviks. They should demand that the works of these revolutionaries be freely published in the USSR and the People's Democracies. Otherwise their pledges of socialist democracy have little credibility."

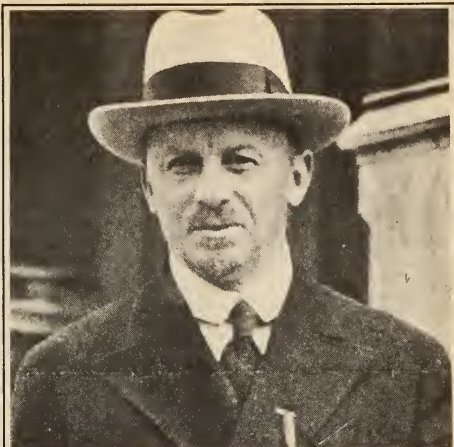
The rehabilitation of the old Bolshevik leaders is the

Mandelites' main tactical overture to the Eurocommunists. Right now the USec (both the Mandelites and the SWP) is actively supporting the campaign to rehabilitate Bukharin led by Italian CP intellectuals, who see in him, not without reason, a forerunner of Dubček's "socialism with a human face."

The Mandelites' "rehabilitate the old Bolsheviks" campaign directed at the Eurocommunists stems from a number of motives. To disassociate their present "democratic" posture from Stalin's terror, the Eurocommunist leaders occasionally say a good word about the old Bolsheviks murdered by the "Great Father of the Peoples" in the Kremlin. Mandel seizes upon these statements as proof that the veteran Stalinist hacks are responding to the "anti-bureaucratic consciousness" of the militant workers.

To prettify Carrillo as a great proletarian democrat, Mandel falsifies outright the Spanish CP leader's position on Andrés Nin, a former Trotskyist killed by the Stalinists during the Spanish Civil War. According to Mandel, Carrillo "completely rehabilitates Andrés Nin against the slanderous accusations made against him by the Spanish Communist Party and the Communist International." Is that so? In fact, Carrillo *condemns* Nin's role in the Barcelona May Days of 1937 (a spontaneous insurrection against the Popular Front government) as "an act of high treason," for which "exemplary punishment by the courts was legally and morally justified" (*Eurocommunism and the State*). Carrillo demurs that Nin should only have been imprisoned, like the other leaders of the May Days, and not murdered. This season Mandel finds it opportune to act as lawyer for Carrillo against the Kremlin, and so is manufacturing evidence on his would-be client's behalf.

Mandel's demand that the West European CP leaders do honor to the Bolshevik old guard also expresses the longstanding Pabloist view that the world Stalinist movement and now its Eurocommunist extension represents the deformed continuation of Lenin's Communist International, and so is itself capable of revolutionary rehabilitation. In this sense the Mandelites' "rehabilitate the Bolshevik old guard" campaign is part and parcel of the traditional Pabloist orientation to the self-reform of the Stalinist



Il Mondo

Nikolai Bukharin

bureaucracy, in this case via the Eurocommunists to the liberal bureaucrats and dissidents in the Soviet bloc.

To call upon the Stalinist apparatus today to rehabilitate its victims of yesterday is to elevate these criminals and murders, betrayers of proletarian revolution, to the judges and final arbiters of the Bolshevik tradition. There could be no greater damage to building revolutionary Fourth Internationalist parties in the Soviet bloc than identifying the Trotskyist cause with those West European so-called "communists" who have dropped even the posture of defending the USSR against imperialism in favor of Carter's anti-Soviet, pro-imperialist "Human Rights" campaign. Trotsky and his Bolshevik comrades who made the October Revolution will be "rehabilitated" only by the proletarian political revolution that ousts the Stalinist bureaucracies and the socialist revolution that sweeps the Carrillos, Marchais and Berlinguets into the dustbin of history. ■



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Buchenwald...

(continued from page 15)

- Confiscation of their property for the benefit of the victims of fascism!
- Conviction of all representatives of the fascist state by freely elected peoples courts!
- Dissolution of the Wehrmacht and its replacement by workers militias!
- Immediate free election of workers and peasants councils throughout all of Germany and a convocation of a general congress of these councils!
- Preservation and extension of these councils, while utilizing all the parliamentary institutions of the bourgeoisie for revolutionary propaganda!
- Expropriation of the banks, heavy industry and the large estates!
- Control of production by the unions and the workers councils!
- Not one man, not one penny for the war debts and the war reparations of the bourgeoisie!
- The bourgeoisie must pay!
- For pan-German socialist revolution! Against a dismemberment of Germany!
- Revolutionary fraternization with the proletarians of the occupying armies!
- For a Germany of workers councils in a Europe of workers councils!
- For world proletarian revolution!

The Internationalist Communists of Buchenwald
(IV International)—20 April 1945

Spartacist Slogan Scandalizes...

(continued from page 24)

A similar fate befell the Frankfurt sect known as the Bund Sozialistischer Arbeiter (BSA), the German mini-satellite of the Healyite Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain. Outside a meeting on Iran held by the BSA on November 2 members of the TLD sold copies of *Kommunistische Korrespondenz* with an article on Iran. Evidently the TLD intervention made an impact, for the BSA turned up at its own next meeting on Iran with a leaflet that was half devoted to attacking the TLD and the iSt and half devoted to enthusing over "the anti-imperialist content of the struggle being waged by Khomeini." After quoting at length from *Kommunistische Korrespondenz* the BSA added indignantly, "Because the TLD was selling this article on November 2 in front of a meeting of the BSA in Frankfurt, there developed an erroneous impression among some people that we had something in common with these politics."

Not only the fake "Trotskyists" but also their would-be Muslim allies have seized upon our slogan as "the communist position" on Iran. Khomeini and his devout followers do not want the support of leftists; Khomeini has often vehemently denounced Marxism as fundamentally hostile to Islamic doctrine. But perhaps the most revealing rebuff to his aspiring leftist allies came in an interview which his principal spokesman, Ibrahim Yazdi, gave to BBC Radio 4 on January 7 in Paris. When pressed by the interviewer to clarify Khomeini's attitude to a "united

Slogans on Iran

The following motion was adopted at a national conference of the Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands on 10 February 1979. It was subsequently endorsed unanimously by a meeting of the International Executive Committee of the international Spartacist tendency that included substantial representation from the Ligue Trotskyste de France and the Spartacist League/Britain.

* * *

The slogan "Down with the shah, Down with the mullahs" expresses the strategic Marxist perspective for the outcome of the Iranian revolution: a life without the shah and without the mullahs. In addition the slogan correctly counterposed us as the revolutionary Marxists to the theocratic reactionaries presently leading the mass movement. There is a weakness to the slogan in that it expresses a historical perspective but lacks a tactical element; also, at the time that the slogan was first promulgated the shah was still in power, and the slogan implied an equivalency between the shah and the mullahs. In the hands of revolutionary Marxists the

slogan was used to express the correct program; in other hands it could be used to mask a sectarian program. As a general propaganda slogan from afar, it warned powerfully and angularly of the catastrophic consequences of tailing after Khomeini. That is why it earned the enmity not only of Muslim fundamentalists but also of the opportunist leftists, who almost without exception joined the mullah camp.

In the hands of revolutionary Marxists the slogan "Down with the shah, Break with the mullahs" could be used correctly, but in other hands the loopholes in the formulation would allow this slogan to be used to express an opportunist program, including seeking to work from the inside of the camp of the mullahs, seeking the non-existent "progressive" wing of the mullahs. In short, this slogan, in the hands of opportunists, is an expression of the stagist theory of the revolution.

The third slogan "Down with the shah, No support to the mullahs" avoids the pitfalls of both of the previous slogans, and although it expresses our program less angularly and forcefully than the first slogan, cuts through the possible misuse of either of the other slogans.

Cover of Payam Daneshjoo (right) published by Iranian supporters of the U.Sec carries photo of anti-shah protest under the slogans, "Down with the Shah monarchy, Long live the Constituent assembly, Long live the republic of workers and peasants." Cropped from the photo were the banners (left) with slogans that hailed "Our leader Khomeini" and "the Muslim nation of Iran."



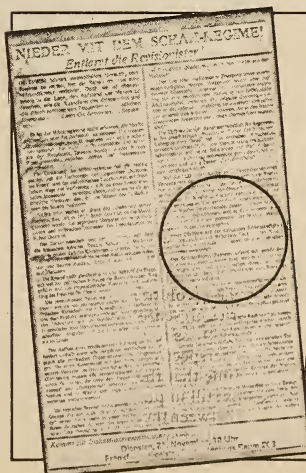
front" with Communists. Yazdi bluntly replied: "They call, 'Down with the Mullahs, Down with the Shah.' That's not supporting the Islamic Muslims."

Unlike these opportunists the iSt seeks and struggles to be identified with the hard communist line on Islamic reaction. Our slogan of "Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!" is not intended to win instant popularity among the masses in Iran who still have illusions in Khomeini. It is dictated by the historic experiences of the proletariat and toiling masses who have passed through and shed just such illusions.

Already many leftists in Iran are learning through bitter experience that their illusions in Khomeini, or in some kind of "unity and struggle" with his turbaned followers, were disastrous. Since the departure of the shah and the intensification of the governmental crisis in Teheran, the mullahs and their devout followers have taken a new offensive to assert their domination over the heterogeneous opposition forces.

At cosmopolitan Teheran University, meetings called to merely discuss the role of Khomeini have been physically attacked by marauding gangs of Muslim fundamentalists. In mid-January a mass march through Teheran by leftists carrying banners that included the slogan "Long Live Khomeini" was attacked by Muslim fanatics who chanted, "The only party is the party of Allah!" And upon his return to Iran Khomeini openly called for a *jihad* against all non-Persians and supporters of foreign powers, which means above all the foreign workers and the left: "I beg God to cut off the hands of all evil foreigners and all their helpers" (quoted in *New York Times*, 1 February 1979).

Under the hammer blows of Islamic reaction at least some subjectively revolutionary militants inside Iran and abroad will decisively break with opportunist capitulation to petty-bourgeois Islamic populism. And when they realize that Khomeini needs SAVAK and the CIA just as much as did the shah, we want to make sure that they also know that only one tendency from the outset sounded the warning—the international Spartacist tendency. ■



Really bizarre ravings from the Healyite slander mill: BSA leaflet on Iran calls James Robertson of the Spartacist League/U.S. the "main spokesman for the national interests of the American bourgeoisie"!

"Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!"

Spartacist Slogan Scandalizes Fake-Trotskyists

For the past year Iran has been rocked by convulsive mass opposition to the tyranny of the butcher shah. This seething popular discontent among broad strata of the population could make Iran the cockpit of proletarian revolution in the Near East. But in the absence of revolutionary proletarian leadership, the unrest has been channeled into a reactionary crusade for an "Islamic republic." Enraged even by the minimal secularizing and modernizing measures of the shah's so-called "White Revolution," Ayatollah Khomeini and his priestly caste of 180,000 mullahs want to impose over all of Iran the Muslim-traditionalist norms of Qum, where no woman dares appear in public without the head-to-foot veil.

Virtually the entire international left has capitulated to the popularity of the mullah-dominated opposition. Against this backdrop the propaganda of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) for the proletariat to sweep away the monarchy and establish a workers and peasants government has had an impact far beyond our small forces.

In the United States Maoists proclaiming the mullahs "progressive" and Muslim students defending the slogan "Death or *hejab*" ("modesty"—i.e., the veil) have vied with each other in seeking to break up Spartacist public forums on Iran. But even more striking has been the response in Europe, as virtually every self-styled "Trotskyist" tendency has been at pains to defend itself against the charge that "You Trotskyites stand for 'Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!'" "Not us, not us," squeak the opportunists, terrified that anyone could accuse them of upholding an authentic Leninist line.

Particularly embarrassed are the United Secretariat (USec) supporters of the Committee Against Repression in Iran (CARI) front group. In England the Spartacist League/Britain has aggressively propagandized for "Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!" in its press and

public meetings. Iranian leftists were soon approaching CARI members on their attitude toward "the Trotskyist position." According to one CARI leaflet in Persian, a CARI activist was expelled from an Iranian Stalinist-controlled student group on the grounds that this slogan had been "one of the slogans" of a CARI demonstration.

In a Persian-language leaflet dated 16 October the CARI Executive Committee protested:

"CARI is strongly against the slogan 'Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!' The position of CARI is to defend all the struggles of all militants against the shah, including the struggles of the militant religious people."

Of course, CARI was less than willing to defend the struggles of Spartacist militants against the shah. CARI excluded Spartacist League/Britain contingents from

CARI-sponsored demonstrations in Birmingham on December 2 and London on December 17, criminally provoking police intervention.

The USec has clearly felt similar pressure in France, where the Ligue Trotskyiste de France has actively publicized the Trotskyist slogan. CARI's French incarnation felt compelled to reproduce and distribute the 16 October CARI-Executive Committee statement in response.

Likewise, in West Germany the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD), German section of the iSt, has succeeded in making our slogan known as "the Trotskyist position on Iran." For example, in West Berlin the deeply demoralized, centrist Spartacusbund sought to add its name to a leaflet circulated by Iranian and other foreign student groups that was uncritical of Khomeini and the mullah-led movement in Iran. However, despite their apologies for Khomeini, the Spartacusbund was not permitted to sign the statement, because, charged the Iranian nationalists, "the Trotskyists" oppose the mullahs.

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Spartacist League/U.S. demonstrates in Los Angeles on January 20.



Imperialist Frenzy Over Afghanistan



Lochan/Gamma-Liaison

Hail Red Army!

The American government is talking as if it is about to start World War III over Afghanistan—or at least a vicarious form of it around the Olympic games. In his “state of the union” speech Jimmy Carter openly threatened a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union in the Persian Gulf. Because the USSR came to the aid of its allies in Kabul, Washington has visions of the Soviet army seizing Iranian and Saudi oilfields, of the staid Brezhnev fomenting revolution among the Kurds, Turko-

mans and, above all, Baluchis. It is patently absurd but the American president really believes it.

Behind Washington's present Cold War frenzy is the fundamental imperialist desire to obliterate the social conquests of the Russian October Revolution. Compared to 20 years ago, however, the United States' world position is greatly weakened and the role of its imperialist allies much greater. The end of U.S. hegemony was marked by

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Hail Red Army!

(continued from page 1)



Nixon's 15 August 1971 New Economic Policy, which destroyed the basis for the post-war capitalist international monetary system. Now the U.S. meets indifference from West Europe and Japan when calling for economic boycotts of Iran and the Soviet Union. Carter is certainly prepared to plunge the world into nuclear holocaust, but whether he can mobilize the population at home and imperialist allies abroad to effectively wage a new Cold War is far from clear.

The effective deployment of thousands of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is a stinging humiliation for American imperialism. The Russian high command watched as Khomeini's Iran slipped into near-total chaos, as U.S. aircraft carriers lined up in the Arabian Sea, as the Soviet-allied Kabul government was threatened by a reactionary Islamic *jihād* (holy war). Seeing Washington at an impasse in Iran, the Kremlin bureaucrats seized the time to quell the uprising by the Afghan mullahs and khans, and in the process extended their defense perimeter by several hundred miles around the eastern flank of Iran.

Anti-Soviet opinion around the world—from the White House to the Chinese Great Hall of the Peoples, from "non-aligned" neo-colonies like Zambia to the Spanish and Italian Communist parties—railed against "Soviet expansionism" which allegedly "had trampled on the national

sovereignty and integrity of Afghanistan." The imperialist media pulled out all the stops to build sympathy for "freedom fighters" battling sophisticated tanks and planes with sticks, stones and chants of "allah akbar." But in the military clash between the Soviet soldiers backing the nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and the feudal (and pre-feudal) forces aided by imperialism, Marxists' side with the forces representing social progress, now led by Russian tanks. That is why the international Spartacist tendency has resoundingly exclaimed: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!

Even if the country is incorporated into the Soviet bloc—a tremendous step forward compared to present conditions in Afghanistan—this can today only be as a *bureaucratically deformed* workers state. Only Trotskyist parties armed with the program of permanent revolution can lead the colonial masses to their complete liberation—through proletarian political revolution in the USSR linked to socialist revolutions from Iran to the imperialist centers. But the liberation of the Afghan masses has begun!

"Born Again" Cold War

The pretext of Soviet troops in Afghanistan was exploited by U.S. president Carter and his Dr. Strangelove "national security" adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski to translate their anti-Soviet "human rights" rhetoric into action. Washington is now organizing a grain boycott of the Soviet Union in the hope of fomenting social discontent. Carter/Brzezinski's message to the Soviet people: Starve for "human rights"! But we doubt that the Soviet masses, who survived Hitler's siege of Leningrad, will respond favorably to the U.S. imperialist rulers' blackmail.

And food is hardly the ultimate weapon. Carter's pious lies about SALT are a thing of the past as the U.S. embarks on a mammoth arms drive. Now there will be a massive weird subway system in the western U.S. to move around the MX mobile missile, a projected first-strike weapon. Carter demanded that NATO allies, including West Germany, accept 572 nuclear missiles targeted at the USSR. And he committed the U.S. to increase real military spending by 5 percent annually for the next five years. All this *before* the Afghan crisis.

Now the claptrap about "détente," SALT, etc.—by which the imperialists seek to negotiate disarmament of the Soviet degenerated workers state—has been put into mothballs. Of course, this counterrevolutionary diplomat-

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ic farce would not have gotten even this far were it not for the class-collaborationist, pacifistic illusions of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

As a further step in Washington's war drive, Secretary of "Defense" Harold Brown was dispatched to Peking to deepen the anti-Soviet U.S./China alliance, already twice tested militarily: over the South African invasion of Angola and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Now the Pentagon wants the Peking Stalinists to channel arms to the reactionary Afghan rebels through their mutual client state, Pakistan. With unprecedentedly forthright bellicosity, Brown's toast at a state banquet called on China to join American imperialism "with complementary actions in the field of defense as well as diplomacy."

The Russians are finally fed up with the nuclear loading of NATO, the "modernizing" of China's arsenal, plans for a "rapid deployment" strike force, draft registration and the sky-high Pentagon budget. In a Moscow meeting with

French National Assembly president Jacques Chaban-Delmas, Brezhnev reportedly warned that Russia "would not tolerate" the nuclear arming of Peking by the U.S., declaring: "Believe me, after the destruction of Chinese nuclear sites by our missiles, there won't be much time for the Americans to choose between the defense of their Chinese allies and peaceful coexistence with us."

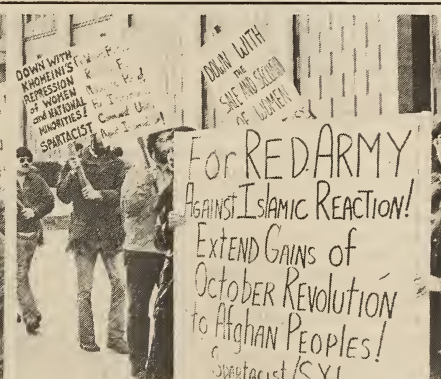
With the Russians made fair game in Carter's Cold War rampage—détente deals off, promised grain and Aeroflot jets stranded, the attempt by New York air controllers to crash a Soviet plane carrying the USSR's ambassador to Washington—Brezhnev's ultimatum is eminently reasonable.

Indeed, for a wide range of public opinion, Washington is now acting like a mad dog that slipped the leash. George Kennan, who was one of the main architects of the early Cold War, undoubtedly speaks for substantial bourgeois

continued on next page



Spartacist Britain



Workers Vanguard



Australasian Spartacist

Internationalism in action: Spartacist demonstrations calling for defense of USSR and victory of Red Army over Afghan reactionaries in London (above), San Francisco (above) and Sydney (right).

sentiment when he cautions against Carter's "strident public warnings" to military action:

"I can think of no instance in modern history where such a breakdown of political communication and such a triumph of unrestrained military suspicions as now marks Soviet-American relations has not led, in the end, to armed conflict."

—*New York Times*, 1 February

For its part, the Kremlin is still seeking accommodation with "realistic, peace-loving" elements of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Whatever their defensive responses to Carter's Cold War frenzy, the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy remains wedded to "peaceful coexistence" with world capitalism. But their "peaceful coexistence" will not bring peace. As American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon declared during the Korean War:

"The class struggle of the workers, merging with the colonial revolution in a common struggle against imperialism, is the only genuine fight against war. The Stalinists who preach otherwise are liars and deceivers. The workers and colonial peoples will have peace when they have the power and use their power to take it and make it for themselves. That is the road of Lenin. There is no other road to peace."

—*The Road to Peace* (1951)

Hue and Cry Over Afghanistan

Today in Afghanistan U.S. imperialism finds itself in league with the defenders of the bride price and the veil, usury and serfdom, and perpetual misery. Victory of the Islamic insurgents in Afghanistan would mean the perpetuation of feudal and pre-feudal enslavement. For that reason we have called for the military victory of the left-nationalist PDPA regime. Now the direct deployment of Soviet troops and confirmation of the Islamic rebels' imperialist ties changes the terms of the conflict. With the Stalinist rulers in the Kremlin, for defensive reasons, for once taking up a genuinely red cause, defense of the USSR itself is directly posed. The Trotskyists stand at their posts.

Much has been made of "the Afghan right to self-determination"—an obscure question (as well as subordinate to overriding class issues) since Afghanistan is

a state and not a nation. But if this "fiercely independent Islamic people," as Carter put it, is about to suffer such horrendous national oppression at the hands of the Soviets, why can Moscow use Muslim-derived Central Asian troops? Obviously because they know that conditions in Soviet Central Asia are vastly superior to those in mullah-ridden Afghanistan. In particular the position of women is a key index of social progress. As the *New York Times* (9 February) has admitted, "It was the Kabul revolutionary Government's granting of new rights to women that pushed orthodox Moslem men in the Pashtoon villages of eastern Afghanistan into picking up their guns." The bride price was a lifetime's savings or lifelong debt to money lenders who charged usurious rates and gave the mullahs their cut in donations. For women it was chattel slavery; for men without means, no money meant no sex with women.

From a military point of view the Soviet intervention may or may not have been wise, though certainly it is deeply just to oppose the Islamic reactionary insurgents backed by imperialism. There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels.

Yet, scandalously, much of the Western left is dancing to Carter's tune. The Maoists, already seasoned drummer boys for the Pentagon, hail the imperialist grain embargo and call on the U.S. to step up aid to the Islamic insurgents. Their anti-Soviet hysteria goes to such lengths that in Frankfurt, West Germany they joined with Afghan ultrarightists in an attempted stabbing murder of a leader of the Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands (section of the ISt) on January 25. Even ostensible Trotskyists are joining the imperialist hue and cry, as the British IMG headlined "Soviet Troops Out of Afghanistan." Their comrades in the French LCR waver from week to week between opposing the mullahs and opposing the Soviet army. And the American SWP tries to pretend that "Soviet intervention is not the issue," that calling the tribesmen "Muslim rebels" is

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*Afghan Ultra-Rightists, Maoists Seal
Anti-Soviet Bloc in Blood*

Attempted Murder of German Spartacist

REPRINTED FROM YOUNG SPARTACUS
NO. 79, FEBRUARY 1980

FEBRUARY 3—A near-fatal knife wound left German Trotskyist Fred Zierenberg fighting for his life in a Frankfurt hospital. The murderous, premeditated attack occurred on January 25 at a public teach-in on Afghanistan at the University of Frankfurt, West Germany. Reactionary Afghanis, Turkish Islamic fanatics and their Maoist lackeys—members of "Fight Back" from the U.S. volunteer army stationed in West Germany—formed a bloc and planned the attack in advance.

The meeting consisted of a series of virulently anti-Soviet speeches and chants of "Death to Trotskyism!" and "Down with the Soviet Union!" During the discussion period a member of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD, German section of the international Spartacist tendency) went to the podium to take the time to speak that she had been granted by the chair. At a signal from the "Fight Back" members, the mullah-lovers launched their vicious attack. In the flurry of fists, boots and knives, seven TLD members and supporters received injuries. In addition to Zierenberg, one comrade received a knife wound in the abdomen, another was beaten unconscious, the others got teeth knocked out and serious blows to the ears. The woman who attempted to speak received a series of vicious kicks to the abdomen. It is clear that these right-wing thugs planned to maim and kill.

The Islamic fanatics and their Maoist goons particularly singled out Fred Zierenberg for attack. Zierenberg, a leading spokesman for the TLD and a trade unionist for more than ten years, was immediately surrounded at the "Fight Back" signal and knifed from behind, receiving a potentially mortal wound that resulted in a 30 percent collapse of one lung. He

Fred
Zierenberg

Workers Vanguard



required an emergency operation, was in danger of losing his life and is still recovering in the Frankfurt hospital.

The TLD was targeted for the bloody assault because of its outspoken support for the Red Army in Afghanistan and its well-known opposition to Islamic reaction.

After fighting their way out of the room, the TLD comrades reassembled outside chanting, "Down with NATO! Hail the Red Army!" They announced that a TLD public meeting on Afghanistan scheduled for January 29 would be held as planned, despite threats of disruption from the Afghani reactionaries.

The TLD meeting was held, with substantial defense by members of the iSt, and the attempt to impose the norms of an "Islamic Republic" at Frankfurt University was successfully repelled. Members of several other left organizations participated in the defense.

Like the pro-Khomeini Iranian students who last year attempted to disrupt forums sponsored by the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League of the U.S., the Afghani reactionaries in Germany and their Maoist accomplices will learn that the voice of authentic Trotskyism *will be heard*. Drawing the Russian question in blood, this attack has only steeled the determination of the TLD to win new recruits to Trotskyism. Hail the Red Army in Afghanistan! Smash Islamic Reaction! We Will Not Be Silenced!

a lie. Meanwhile, the pseudo-leftist "Parity Committee" of Morenoites and Lambertists calls for military support to the Afghan reactionaries and even for extending the "Islamic revolution" into the Soviet Union!

One reason for the fake-lefts' shameful confusion and outright counterrevolutionary backing for the imperialist-aided rebels is that they all support the analogous movement—Khomeini's theocratic, clerical-feudalist regime—next door in Iran. But in Afghanistan the CIA and Khomeini are on the same side of the barricades, and massive Red Army support to the Kabul regime against the American and Pakistani-backed Islamic tribal revolt poses the Russian question pointblank.

By giving unconditional military support to the Soviet Army and PDPA forces, the Spartacist tendency in no way places political confidence in the Kremlin bureaucracy or its left-nationalist allies in Afghanistan. Only a proletarian political revolution in the USSR can truly restore the Red Army and the Soviet state to their internationalist and revolutionary mission. Only the overthrow of the imperialist powers by the working classes, under the leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard party, can lay the basis for the world socialist order which will lift deeply oppressed and backward regions like Afghanistan out of their poverty, isolation and obscurantism, establishing the genuine social equality of all peoples. ■

Rotten Blocs Shatter United Secretariat

REPRINTED FROM *WORKERS VANGUARD*
NO. 245, 7 DECEMBER 1979

For the past decade and a half the main drawing card of the "United Secretariat" (USec) has been its pretensions to be the Fourth International. Even while its warring factions were publicly hurling epithets at each other from opposite sides of the barricades over Portugal in 1975, the USec could still attract subjectively revolutionary militants with its claim to be the organizational embodiment of the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky. And woe to any USec dissidents who challenged this myth—over the years left oppositions have been summarily chucked out for such sacrilege.

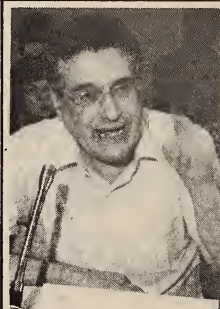
Now in the last two months the USec has been torn apart over Nicaragua, with two blocs (each a marriage of convenience, in true USec tradition) taking shape to claim the title. For Ernest Mandel the split exploded his reveries of presenting a "united" USec as an international clearing-house for the "broad far left." The expellees and their new-found allies are now as aggressive as the USec in presuming to speak for "the world movement." Yet the counterposed blocs are deeply unstable, both consisting of centrist-talking adventurers (Mandel and Moreno) combined with hard social-democratic reformist national machines (the American SWP and the French OCI respectively).

On the USec side, its just concluded "Eleventh World Congress" saw three main tendencies most clearly expressed in their competing motions on the nature of the present Sandinista/bourgeois government in Nicaragua. The right wing around Jack Barnes' SWP praised the present ruling junta in Managua as a workers and peasants government; to cozy up to the FSLN (explicitly endorsed as a "revolutionary leadership") the SWP acts as a fingerman and political adviser to the Sandinista secret police against supposed "ultra-lefts" (including its erstwhile Morenoite "comrades").

In the middle there was the grouping around Mandel, saying in typical centrist fashion that the nature of the Nicaraguan regime was undetermined. And there was Mandel's left cover, the hodgepodge centered on the British IMG, sections of the Swedish KAF and the Matti tendency in the French LCR. These "loyal oppositionists" labeled the Sandinista junta a bourgeois class-collaborationist regime, but instead of calling for a Trotskyist party to organize independent proletarian opposition in Nicaragua, they accepted the USec's liquidationist policy of entry into the petty-bourgeois bonapartist FSLN.

On the other side, the new lash-up between the French OCI of Pierre Lambert and Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction (BF) is one of the more unnatural alliances in history. When Vishinsky ranted at the Moscow Trials against a "bloc of rights and Trotskyites" it was a Stalinist slander, but the OCI and Moreno have actually created something worse; Trotsky and Bukharin had more in common than this pair! Lambert's organization is a known quantity among ostensible Trotskyists in Europe: its social-democratic Stalinophobic politics meant eagerly supporting the candidate of the popular front, Socialist leader Mitterrand, in the 1973 French presidential election. By 1975 the OCI's slide into reformism was sealed by its support to the "democratic" CIA-funded Portuguese Socialists as the latter spearheaded a counterrevolutionary anti-Communist mass mobilization.

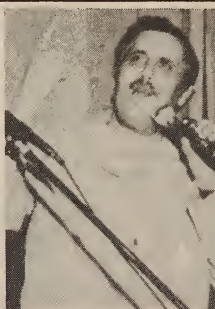
The Morenoite current is far more contradictory. Moreno himself was a reformist in Argentina, but one who lost his reformist base, the direct tie to his "own" bourgeoisie. Forcibly separated from the national terrain of Argentine reformism, with nothing to sell out and no Perón to sell it to, Moreno—now based on the Colombian PST—chose to embark on a leftist adventure in Nicaragua. Now seeking to consolidate the benefits of his refurbished militant reputation, Moreno has gone out on a centrist swing. His Bolshevik Faction has been built on a left critique of the Mandelites' response to "Eurocommunism" and of the SWP over Portugal and Angola. On these



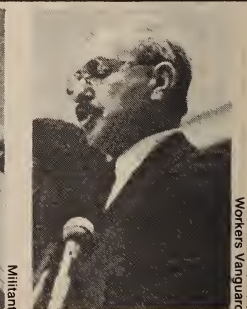
Ernest Mandel



Jack Barnes



Nahuel Moreno



Pierre Lambert

Kommunistische Korrespondenz

Workers Vanguard

Militant

Workers Vanguard

positions the BF sounds uncannily close to the positions of the international Spartacist tendency—but it is a fraud: Moreno is a consummate charlatan. We can prove it, and we have, in the *Moreno Truth Kit*.

For some time now this Argentine political *bandolero* had been sneaking up on Mandel, scurrying through the bushes and then hiding under the skirts of a larger group, only to break from it on a "left" basis when an appropriate opportunity presents itself. First with the SWP (1969-75) in the reformist, pseudo-orthodox "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" (which was at bottom a reformist opposition to Mandel's vicarious guerrillism), then in a more informal way in bloc with Mandel. Each time he has extended his influence: first to the rest of Latin America, then establishing a beachhead on the southern flank of Europe. Meanwhile his policies at home remained ultra-reformist (written declarations of support to the Peronist regime, equating left-wing guerrillas with fascist death squads, etc.).

Now Moreno is at it again, this time with the OCI, and the current bloc is even less stable than his previous operations. Its components can't even agree on whether they are for the "reconstruction," "reorganization" or "reunification" of the Fourth International and Moreno has admitted that his "Parity Committee" with the OCI is nothing but a defensive "united front"—but one which supposedly will proceed to build "Trotskyist parties" despite its disagreements over fundamental political issues. The "Parity Committee" is merely a cynical attempt to trump the Mandelites by playing the "unity" card, and not surprisingly the USec is invited to join up.

The uproar over Nicaragua has sent left-wing elements in the USec into turmoil. Many are being sucked into the Moreno/OCI bloc, which on this issue stands to the left of



Workers Vanguard

Sandinista diplomat Jaime Wheelock in New York. Spartacist spokesmen demanded, "Why are revolutionaries in your jails?"

the USec's bottomless liquidation. Particularly in France a number of leftists have joined the new Ligue Communiste Internationaliste (LCI) despite its cynical OCI-loyalist leadership. Elsewhere such elements are still being held in tow by the USec (England, Sweden). Both in Spain and Italy there are relatively large Morenoite breakaway organizations, but ones whose political practice has been exposed as clearly rightist.

But both the USec and Moreno/OCI blocs are showing a suddenly increased vulnerability to the Spartacist tendency. The response has been a wave of scummy cop-baiting and thug violence in the worst Stalinist tradition. Both the LCR and OCI recently used goon squads to attempt to silence the Ligue Trotskyiste de France. But already this policy is beginning to backfire. Only four days after the USec's GIM local in Köln, West Germany, expelled our comrades of the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands from a public forum, the GIM local in Tübingen at a November 27 public meeting on Iran solidarized with the TLD's proletarian opposition to clerical reaction in Iran. No wonder Mandel told the last GIM conference that regarding the future of his German section, "one can only pray."

We can do more than pray. Over the years, serious leftist USec supporters who sought an alternative to petty-bourgeois impressionism and popular frontism have regrouped themselves behind the authentic Trotskyist program of the international Spartacist tendency. From the Cuban Revolution to the clericalist mass mobilizations in Iran and the insurgency in Nicaragua, our tendency has counterposed the struggle for Trotskyist parties to the Pablist liquidationism of the USec. Now again this crisis of the USec milieu provides opportunities to regroup subjectively revolutionary militants from the USec into an internationalist formation fighting for the rebirth of Trotsky's Fourth International. ■

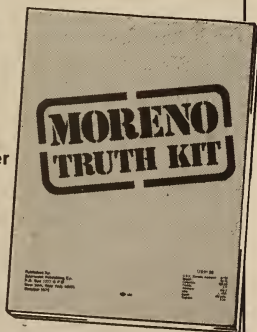
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SWP/USec Criminal Tailism in Iran



Khomeini's Persian-chauvinist militiamen bring the "Islamic revolution" to Kurdistan.

UPI

History Takes Its Vengeance

The following article first appeared in *Workers Vanguard* No. 239, 14 September 1979. It exposes how the United Secretariat (USec) criminally capitulated to the reactionary mullah-led "Islamic revolution" in Iran, even as 14 members of the USec's affiliate languished in Khomeini's jails awaiting execution. Since this article was first published, several important developments have taken place which require comment—the American embassy crisis in Iran, the international crisis precipitated by the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, and the split in the USec leading to the formation of the "Parity Committee" lashing together the Bolshevik Faction (BF) of political adventurer Nahuel Moreno and the reformist Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) of Pierre Lambert.

The persecution of the USec's Iranian affiliate, the Socialist Workers Party (HKS), in late summer-early fall was part of the Khomeini regime's response to growing mass discontent and resistance. Once again leftist protesters were marching through Teheran, unemployed workers staging militant demonstrations and, most threatening to Khomeini, the national minorities (especially the Kurds) were rebelling. It was against this background that in late October Khomeini encouraged his followers to seize the American embassy, hold its personnel hostage and demand the return of the shah. Through this spectacular political

diversion the reactionary religious fanatic could once again appear before the Iranian people as the enemy of the hated shah and U.S. imperialism. In fact, the embassy seizure was an attempt to shore up his regime, specifically designed to ensure Khomeini's victory in the upcoming referendum making him the all-powerful *faghi* (Führer), supposedly Allah's chosen leader over the people of Iran. The essentially diversionary nature of the embassy seizure was recognized by the leftist Fedayeen in Iran and even by the European Mandelites in the USec.

But not the SWP. They rushed to the newly elected imam's defense, claiming, "Khomeini today has the greatest authority in the country as an anti-imperialist leader" (*Militant*, 28 December 1979). Therefore, argued the SWP, any criticism of Khomeini, even from the left, was pro-imperialist. This timeworn Stalinist methodology was dragged out of mothballs for the 17 December issue of the SWP's *Intercontinental Press* in an article entitled, "How the Left Responded to Carter's War Drive." The article's wildest slanders are reserved for the Spartacist League, which it claimed has "increasingly taken outright racist and pro-imperialist positions" because we expose Khomeini's crimes against the Iranian oppressed and call for workers revolution in Iran.

As demonstrated in our reply, "Why They Lie for Khomeini" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 246, 28 December

1979), the SWP's reasoning is but the mirror image of liberal imperialist ideology. If Khomeini is guilty of the crimes we accuse him of, if the Iranian masses suffer under the burden of religious obscurantism, then in the eyes of the SWP this could only serve to justify bringing "human rights" to the Iranian people by sending in the U.S. marines. Communists reject this liberal imperialist syllogism; we said: "Khomeini Nuttier Than Shah, But Hands Off Iran!" Under the guise of combating imperialist chauvinism, the SWP denies the social reality of backward, capitalist Iran: the *chador* becomes a symbol of women's "liberation" rather than of their enslavement in Islamic countries, self-flagellation as a Shi'ite rite practiced during the holy month of Moharram and witnessed by millions on television is an outright fabrication of the *Wall Street Journal*. Claiming that hostility toward Khomeini's Iran in the U.S. is solely the creation of imperialist media fabrication, the *Militant* would save Iran from U.S. invasion by its own media manipulation. Marxists understand that the social force of clerical reaction in Iran today is a product of economic retardation imposed upon that region by imperialism and that the masses will be emancipated from the chains of religious obscurantism only upon the economic foundations of proletarian revolution.

Likewise, the HKS also hailed the embassy takeover. Ten of the fourteen imprisoned HKS members were released. Meanwhile, the HKS underwent a split essentially pitting the pro-SWP elements, largely trained as students in the U.S., against the Mandeliste centrists, mainly derived from Iranian students in Europe. The issue which precipitated the split was the pro-SWP leadership's insistence on standing for the Islamic Assembly of Experts last August against the will of the majority of the group, who favored a boycott.

If the seizure of the American embassy momentarily refurbished Khomeini's credentials as an "anti-imperialist," the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan utterly exploded that fraudulent image. The president of the United States is now obsequiously wooing the imam for a joint *jihad* against godless Russia. Carter might just propose that the embassy hostages be drafted into the Iranian army and sent to fight the Soviets at the Khyber. For his part, Khomeini has pledged "unconditional support" to the anti-Soviet Afghan tribalists and, in fact, has been aiding them all along.

In supporting the clerical reactionary Khomeini, the left was not only hypnotized by his mass following, but believed his anti-Westernism would surely tear Iran out of America's hands. But as Afghanistan proves, conflicts between the deeply conservative Islamic priest caste and their imperialist overlords can only have a fleeting and superficial character. When faced with Cold War polarization linked to the possibility of social revolution in the East, the mullahs will always unite with imperialism against the Soviet degenerated workers state.

Khomeini's fake-Trotskyist enthusiasts either deny this or join him on the anti-Communist side of the barricades. While the SWP defends the Soviet action in Afghanistan, it denies that the anti-Communist, feudalist insurgency is based on Islamic fundamentalism. As for Carter's anti-Soviet offensive, the SWP tries to duck the Russian

continued on next page

Morenoites Call For Counterrevolution in USSR

Some would-be Trotskyists might think the Moreno tendency is leftist because it sent a brigade to Nicaragua and parades around in guerrilla outfits. Then take a look at the Morenoites' call for counterrevolution in Russia based on their support to Khomeini. Of all groups on the left this is the only one that tries to outdo the crazed anti-Communism of Brzezinski:

"The counterrevolutionary Kremlin bureaucracy is discrediting itself by a criminal action against the Afghan people, trampling its right to independence, intervening on its territory without any justification. Defense against external action was not the motive in telling the USSR to intervene, but, on the contrary, an obvious attempt to reinforce its own control, to maintain the status quo in the area shaken by revolutionary ferment. The possibility of extending the Iranian revolution within the borders of the USSR is what terrorizes the Kremlin bureaucracy. The Soviet border populations, tied to those in Iran and Afghanistan by religious, cultural and racial ties, can be infected by the radicalization of the area, can become protagonists in an anti-bureaucratic mobilization within the workers state, laying the basis for a political revolution. This is what the bureaucracy is afraid of, this is why the USSR intervened."

—*Avanzata Proletaria* No. 28,
12 January 1980

This is no isolated deviation (and what a deviation!) by the Morenoites' Italian group. The Parity Committee of the Morenoite/Lambertist bloc calls for the Soviet army to withdraw and leave its arms with the Islamic anti-Communist guerrillas!

"The revolutionary wave born in Iran could only have destabilizing effects in Afghanistan. If religion can be included as an element of national affirmation, the movement which allows a rebellion to develop against the central power is not, any more than in Iran, a 'religious' movement. It takes part in the totality of the mobilization of the masses in this region, and directs itself against a state which remains a semi-colonial bourgeois state....

"If it were a question of aiding the struggle of the Afghan people to realize their national and social aspirations in opposition to imperialism, the rulers of the USSR would need only order their troops to leave their weapons in the hands of the Afghan mass revolutionary movement."

—*Informations Ouvrières*,
19-26 January 1980

This shrill anti-Sovietism must please the notoriously Stalinophobic French OCI with whom Moreno has blocked to split the United Secretariat. But any radical who thinks that Moreno represents any kind of revolutionary Trotskyism had better think again. You might find yourself in the mountains of Afghanistan fighting in an "Imam Khomeini Brigade" against the godless Communist menace. ■

question, declaring that "the issue is not Soviet intervention."

The unstable "Parity Committee" has followed Khomeini into the camp of imperialist counterrevolution, supporting the reactionary Islamic forces in Afghanistan (see accompanying box). For the Lambertists, this is a culmination of their long-standing social-democratic Stalinophobia. For the Morenoists, their position was consistent with their identification with third worldist bonapartist nationalism, even in its most reactionary, anti-Communist forms.

While posturing as a left opposition within the USec, the BF of Moreno was, if anything, even more enthusiastic over Khomeini's "Islamic revolution" than was the SWP. The Bolshevik Faction hailed the Persian mullahs' revolution and criticized the Mandelite/SWP bloc for minimizing its world-historic import:

"The United Secretariat has been categorically, theoretically, and politically contradicted by the Iranian revolution, which has been the most spectacular example of an upsurge to be seen in recent years....

"...the Iranian revolution once again shifts the epicenter of world revolution to the colonial world."

—Declaration and Platform of the Bolshevik Faction," *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* Vol. XVI No. 3, July 1979

For the would-be Trotskyist "imam" from Argentina, Khomeini (like Perón) is merely another "progressive, anti-imperialist" *caudillo* whose corporatist institutions can supposedly serve as the foundation for "proletarian" rule. Now with the Afghanistan crisis, the Morenoists have carried their belief in the world-historic mission of the Persian mullahs' revolution to the point of calling for its extension to the border peoples of the Soviet Union!

The Mandelite centrists are zigzagging between class-treasonous calls for Soviet withdrawal (tailing the Eurocommunist milieu) and the grudging admission that Afghanistan does pose the military defense of the USSR against imperialism. The initial response of the British International Marxist Group was to demand, "Soviet Troops Out of Afghanistan!" in the name of national self-determination. As if the democratic right of national self-determination stands higher than the defeat of feudalist counterrevolution or the military defense of the Soviet Union! The organ of the USec's premier French section,

Rouge, takes a different line on Afghanistan every week, sometimes two different lines in the same issue. But, even if they now abjure the defeatist call for the withdrawal of the Red Army, the European Mandelites still condemn the Soviet intervention. In sharpest contrast, we recognize that the Soviet intervention opens the possibility of the social liberation of the peoples of Afghanistan and is a fully justifiable defensive response to U.S. imperialism's present war drive.

* * * * *

They bowed to their executioners.

As Ayatollah Khomeini rose to power in Iran following the overthrow of the bloody shah, the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) emblazoned a headline hailing this event across the front page of its newspaper, a headline which will be immortalized in the annals of class treachery: "VICTORY IN IRAN!" (*Militant*, 23 February). So whose victory now, SWP?

Every day since the fall of the Peacock Throne events in Iran have confirmed that the spoils of this "victory" are the savage repression of minorities, the execution of strikers, homosexuals, adulterers and others accused of "crimes against god"; the stoning of unveiled women, the suppression of all opposition parties and press. The current slaughter of hundreds of Kurds in northwestern Iran is only the most recent repressive measure of this Shi'ite theocracy in consolidating its victory.

The international Spartacist tendency (iSt) was unique on the left in telling the truth which every day receives confirmation in Khomeini's "Islamic Republic": the mullahs' victory means a regime just as reactionary as the shah's. In contrast, the SWP and its co-thinkers in the Iranian HKS (Socialist Workers Party) disguised and obscured at every stage the reactionary character of Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalist regime. Today the HKS is experiencing the consequences of the "victory" it cheered only six months ago as it, along with other left and secular groups, has had its offices sacked and closed, its press suppressed, its members beaten, jailed and threatened with execution.

Despite the fact that brutal Islamic repression against the left, women, national minorities and homosexuals began on Day 1 of the mullahs' regime, the egregiously misnamed "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), to which both the American SWP and Iranian HKS are "fraternally" affiliated, characterized the ayatollah as "progressive" and "anti-imperialist." Even Khomeini's attack on their HKS comrades brought forth a desultory response. The one thing the SWP did energetically was to exclude Spartacists from defense of the threatened Iranian socialists. Only now that it has finally dawned on these inveterate tailists, blinded by their opportunism, that they may actually have to pay for their treachery has the USec belatedly sprung to life and begun screaming from the pages of their newspapers, "Stop Execution of Socialists in Iran!"

In time-honored reformist fashion they are trying to cover their tracks by playing up the threat hanging over the arrested HKSers. The Stalinists used the same play arrested the 1973 Pinochet coup, trying to focus protests on freeing imprisoned Communist leader Corvalán. The iSt, which defended Corvalán, also pointed out that the

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Spartacist League/Britain
demonstrates in London
(1 September 1979) to
protest Khomeini's white
terror against Kurds, Arab
oil workers, imprisoned
HKS members and other
leftists.



Chilean CP's call for confidence in the "constitutional" officer corps paved the way for bloody counterrevolution. Again today we point the finger of guilt. The HKS' present plight was prepared by their own criminal policy. *The real story is: their comrades are not just martyrs—they are sacrificial victims of the USec's support for Khomeini.*

But these gentlemen socialists don't like to talk about responsibility for crimes. Speaking recently in the United States, USec leader Ernest Mandel reacted angrily to Spartacist accusations that he and his organization had betrayed the working class with its support to popular frontism in Chile, Portugal and elsewhere:

"I don't see any workers struggles betrayed by the organization I stand for.... The word 'betrayals' is completely out of order.... You can say it was a wrong policy, or a political mistake. But to speak about betrayals—you can't put in the same category people who are responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands and millions of workers."

For seminar socialists like Mandel, words do not have consequences. If the USec called for Latin American youth to go into the hills to follow Guevara's bankrupt guerrilla strategy, if the SWP supported the counterrevolutionary mobilization spearheaded by the CIA-bankrolled Portuguese socialists—no matter, it's just a "political mistake."

No, it is a *betrayal*—of the proletariat, of Marxism, of anyone who follows your advice. And that is what has taken place in Iran. True, the USec is not influential enough to lead "hundreds of thousands and millions of workers to their deaths"—but at least 14 of its own supporters in the Iranian HKS are now facing life imprisonment or sitting on death row, jailed by the regime whose victory was greeted by these pseudo-Trotskyist tailists.

USec, SWP, HKS—Ernest Mandel, Jack Barnes and the rest: you have committed a crime, for which you will be held responsible before the court of history. You must live with it because your own comrades may die for it.

Cover-Up

After working for months to disguise the reactionary character of Khomeini's Islamic regime, the USec is now desperately trying to shift its line without anybody noticing. Today *Socialist Challenge* (30 August), newspa-

per of the British International Marxist Group (IMG), proclaims in bold letters across its back page, "White Terror in Iran," and announces "Khomeini has become the Shah of Iran." The IMG neglects to inform us how this reactionary regime came to replace Khomeini's "progressive" rule which it applauded only yesterday. Similarly, *Rouge* (24-30 August), newspaper of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, goes so far as to speak of Khomeini's "coup de force." Against himself?

For its part, the U.S. Socialist Workers Party is also moving (albeit more slowly) to disassociate itself from the bloody ayatollah. Today they write:

"Khomeini's moves against the Iranian working people—aimed to protect the ill-gotten gains of the landlords and capitalists—lead him toward subordination to U.S. imperialism, in spite of the anti-imperialist posture he has tried to adopt up to now."

—*Militant*, 7 September 1979

But it was the SWP which was the foremost con man on the American left for "Khomeini's anti-imperialist posture." Less than one year ago the SWP hailed Khomeini in the *Militant* (17 November 1978) as "progressive":

"Although Khomeini subscribes to a religious ideology, the basis of his appeal is not religious reaction. On the contrary, he has won broad support among the Iranian masses because his firm opposition to the Shah and the Shah's 'modernization' is progressive."

The SWP is so ensconced in its cocoon of bourgeois-democratic illusions that it does not recognize the burning importance of the separation of church and state for backward countries. Khomeini's religious ideology is his political program: i.e., an Islamic fundamentalist theocracy based on Great Persian chauvinism and the moral codes of desert bedouins.

When the iSt told the truth about what the victory of Islamic reaction would mean and raised the slogan: "Down With the Shah! Down With the Mullahs!" the SWP claimed we were "blinded by sectarianism" and "chauvinist." But the real chauvinists were those who refused to do their internationalist duty and warn the Iranian toiling masses that Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" would prove no more progressive than the shah's "White Revolution." For many sections of the oppressed (e.g., religious

continued on next page

minorities and women), it has already proven more repressive. This is even acknowledged in the SWP's own publications.

A recent issue of *Intercontinental Press* (10 September 1979) contains a translation from a report made by a prominent Algerian lawyer who visited prisoners held in Karoun Prison located in Khuzistan which contains Iran's Arab minority. Arab prisoners are reported as explaining:

"...that the Iranian revolution meant no change as far as they were concerned. For them the exactions of the old regime, based on the local feudal rulers continue, oppressing them both economically and socially. The same feudal rulers today are allied with the officials of the new regime, creating a continuity of repression."

Where is the "victory" for the Arab minority of Khuzistan, criminal opportunists of the SWP?

Theocratic Parliamentary Cretinism

The HKS tried to present its credentials as a loyal social-democratic opposition to the dictatorship of the mullahs by running in the August elections for the so-called Assembly of Experts. But in a theocracy, social democracy doesn't pay, even for short-sighted, narrow-minded opportunists. According to the election statement in the last issue of the HKS paper *Kargar* (*Worker*) printed before its suppression and dated 8 August:

"Three days from now, elections will be held for the Assembly of Experts. This body is to ratify a new constitution for Iran.... This constitution must defend the gains of the revolution and extend them.... The new constitution must pave the way for the establishment of such a government of the oppressed majority."

In fact, the Assembly of Experts was bound by Khomeini's phony referendum for an Islamic Republic, which explicitly ruled out a constituent assembly. The Assembly of Experts could only amend Khomeini's draft constitution consistent with institutionalizing the Islamic Republic, and the political and social hegemony of the mullahs. The Assembly of Experts was no more a constituent assembly than is the college of cardinals. Nor was it any more democratically "elected" than that appendage of the papacy.

Given the predetermined outcome of a Shi'ite clerical dictatorship, many political parties of secular groups and minorities boycotted the elections, including all the Arab parties. Even the main liberal bourgeois party, the National Democratic Front (NDF), refused to participate as "a protest in principle against the revolutionary regime's lack of attention to basic human rights." In Iranian Kurdistan less than ten percent of the eligible voters cast ballots. Thus, the HKS presented the ludicrous spectacle of self-proclaimed "Trotskyists" running for a seat in the Assembly of Experts next to mullahs who were arguing over whether this or that clause was consistent with the Koran.

The 10 September issue of *Intercontinental Press* quotes long passages from the last issue of *Kargar* enthusing over the HKS participation in the elections of Islamic "experts." But the SWP suppresses the existence of an article in the same issue of *Kargar* entitled, "Last Minute Before Publication," which states that: "There is a very important discussion in the party whether to boycott or participate in the elections of the Assembly of Experts." Apparently, participating in the elections for the rubber-stamp

"assembly" of the Islamic Republic was so unsavory that even a significant section of the mullah-tailist HKS balked. The *Kargar* article reports: "As is well known, three of our 18 candidates boycotted the elections."

Fruits of Betrayal

In covering up for Khomeini's reactionary regime and their own record on Khomeini, it is the SWP that has been forced to resort to deliberate lying. A typical piece of slanderous rubbish about that "irrelevant sect," the Spartacist League, that has come to fill so many pages of the *Militant* lately is a piece in the 6 July issue entitled "Spartacists Foiled in Attempt to Sabotage Defense." According to the article, the SL was excluded from a picket to protest the jailing of the HKS because it brought "provocative signs." Through partial quotation the SWP distorts the slogans on the signs: "Overthrow Islamic Reaction" and "Down with Khomeini," instead of "For Workers Revolution to Overthrow Islamic Reaction" and "Down with Khomeini, For Workers Revolution."

According to the SWP, these slogans "were a clear echo of imperialist propaganda against the Iranian workers and peasants"—from which one can only deduce that the SWP believes that the Carter administration is calling for workers revolution in Iran. The article states that the SL was "told by picket organizers that the protest was not open to opponents of the Iranian revolution"—i.e., Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution." Appropriately enough, according to SWP methodology, in order to "defend" the jailed HKS militants one must simultaneously defend their torturers, jailers, and potential executioners—or at least not attack them openly!

The SWP's international bloc partners in the so-called United Secretariat do not have a better record. In a heated exchange with supporters of the SL and its youth section, the Spartacus Youth League, at Boston University on July 17, Mandel defended the SWP's "Victory in Iran" headline by stating:

"Some of our comrades are in jail—but our organization is legal. Our paper is legal; it is sold in tens of thousands of copies like all other left-wing papers in Iran. Were they legal under the shah?... So what you have is a step from a reactionary dictatorship, which was bourgeois, towards what you could call partial bourgeois democracy.... We said that it is the beginning of the process of permanent revolution...."

—*WV* No. 237, 3 August

One month later the HKS, along with all other left and secular organizations, was illegal, its press banned, its leaders in jail. Is that what you call the next stage in the "process of permanent revolution," Professor Mandel?

The national secretary of the pro-Mandel IMG in England, Brian Grogan, was so swept up in the "process of permanent revolution" when he was in Teheran that he joined the *chador*-covered women and the men carrying icons of Khomeini and chanted "allah akbar" ("god is great"). At a recent demonstration against Khomeini's terror in front of the Iranian embassy in London, called by a Kurdish student association and endorsed by the IMG, Grogan's disgusting action was not forgotten. As the IMG supporters present—a small fraction of their local membership, in the midst of the USec's supposed "emergency campaign"—stood by, the 50-strong contingent of the Spartacist League/Britain chanted: "2, 4, 6, 8—



Reza/Sipa-Black Star

Iranian left's tailing of Khomeini only emboldened Muslim zealots. Above: pipe-swinging, rock-throwing thugs attack leftists in Tehran.

Does Grogan still think god is great?" Another SL chant was: "Last autumn you said Khomeini's fine, it's kind of late to change your line."

The central slogan carried on the SL/B placards was: "USec/IMG Line Kills Arabs, Kurds, Leftists." Other Spartacist signs included: "You Cheered for Khomeini, But You're Not Cheering Now," "Free the HKS and Fedayeen Supporters" and "Khomeini's Revolution Means Massacre of Kurds." On several occasions, when SLers and the Kurdish students jointly chanted "Down with the new shah" and "Down with Khomeini, for workers revolution," the IMG tried to drown this out with slogans which did not attack the ayatollah. Not only do these fake-Trotskyists refuse to directly denounce the mullahs' rule, but they have sabotaged the defense of their own imprisoned comrades in Iran. The IMG waited a month to call its first defense demonstration (on July 7), and then sent only a handful of supporters to the protest.

On the face of it, the USec "defense" of their comrades would seem sectarian and defeatist—if one supposes that their concern was to defend imprisoned leftists. But then the USec at most gave lip service to defense of the Fedayeen, a far larger irritant to the Khomeini regime, when they came under attack. The HKS also abandoned the demand for the Kurdish right of self-determination when things got hot. No, their central aim is to defend Khomeini. And the ultimate price of their betrayal has not been paid by them—as of yet—but by the oppressed masses of Iran. But now they appeal for support.

Last fall as the mullah-led opposition gained force, the iSt warned that the Islamic clerics were as reactionary as the butcher shah. But when we said "Down with the shah, down with the mullahs!" the USec/SWP replied that this is imperialist propaganda, that we were apologists for the

shah. In February, when we said "Mullahs Win" the SWP proclaimed "Victory in Iran" and denounced the iSt position as "counterrevolutionary." We said "Your comrades may die, but you support Khomeini," and the fake-Trotskyists physically expelled us from "private" picket lines defending the HKS, refusing to march with anyone who doesn't swear fealty to the "imam." You bowed to Khomeini and while you were kneeling the executioner comes along and is about to cut off your heads. So now you want sympathy for your plight.

All those concerned for democratic rights must demand freedom for imprisoned Kurdish partisans, Arab oil workers, HKS members and other leftists, and all victims of Khomeini's reactionary terror. But the working class must never forget those fake-lefts who claimed Khomeini as a "progressive" alternative to the shah, who hoped to ride to popularity or power on the coattails of Islamic reaction. They are covered with blood.

Even Stalin criticized Chiang Kai-shek after the Shanghai massacre. The USec's sudden discovery that Khomeini is not so progressive after all outdoes Stalin himself in hypocrisy. Chiang Kai-shek claimed to be a revolutionary nationalist and friend of the Russian Revolution when he was courting Stalin's support. But Khomeini stated from the very beginning that he was a reactionary Islamic fundamentalist and Great Persian chauvinist who sought to crush the "satanic communists." The criminal opportunism of the USec over Iran cannot be buried beneath its present (still half-hearted) criticisms and cries for international solidarity for its own supporters in Iran who are as much victims of its own wretched line as they are of capitalist terror. The rebirth of the Fourth International depends upon burning this betrayal and its consequences into the collective memory of the Marxist movement. ■

Tibet: Mao's Afghanistan

Maoists all over the world are screaming about Soviet "imperialism" subjugating "poor little" Afghanistan. Yet 20 years ago the Chinese deformed workers state had to quell an analogous uprising of Buddhist monks, feudal landlords and tribesmen in Tibet. The then-Trotskyist Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) denounced the imperialist propaganda campaign for the Tibetan counterrevolutionaries. We reprint a leaflet issued by the Eugene V. Debs Club of Berkeley, California and the East Bay YSA (Young Socialist, June 1959). It occasioned some reaction in the local radical milieu as it was known to have been written by Jim Robertson, a former long-time Shachtmanite "third campist," as his first statement of Trotskyist Soviet defensism.

* * * * *

A hue and cry has gone up throughout the "free" world and especially in the United States over the latest alleged atrocity of the Chinese (Communist) government. This "atrocity" is the attempt, assured of final success, to reestablish Chinese dominance in the face of revolt planned and led by the Tibetan priestly and landowning classes.

The situation is clear enough in broad outline. To their discredit, the Chinese government has attempted to conciliate with the Tibetan feudal classes for the past eight years. At the same time, as the product of a revolutionary upheaval, the Chinese regime brings with it certain reforms. These reforms, such as rudimentary education, threatened the age-old system of oppression of the peasants by the native rulers. These latter worthies, headed by their "god-king," felt undermined, and while they still had at least a measure of popular support staged a coup which ran into Chinese military resistance.

As an aside to those in the West who profess to admire the quaint devotion of the more backward in Asia to their religious leaders, let it be noted that these condescending attitudes went out with the "humble, devout" French serf of before 1789 and the "carefree, contented" Negro slaves in America. Oppression and obscurantism that lead to blighted and shortened lives are vicious. The path of human betterment is through increasing men's understanding and control of their universe, not by use of rosaries and prayer wheels.

Several defenses have been put forward in favor of the Tibetan feudalists. (1) "Freedom and democracy"!! When in the last two thousand years have the Tibetan people voted or been asked about anything? The very revolt was in part against the eventual possibility of that sort of thing.

(2) "Another Hungary". In Hungary the revolution fought to go forward, seeking to smash the Stalinist bureaucracy (the brothers of Mao and company) in favor of rule from below and for socialism, and against the old order of great landed estates, privately owned factories, clericalism, and political rule by Admiral Horthy's fascist gang.

(3) "Self-determination" might have been a serious basis for deciding in favor of Tibetan independence could someone figure out how the Tibetan people are to express their choice in a nation where the "god-king" gives all the answers as well as asks all the questions. But in reality this aspect is without meaning.

The real choice for Tibet if Chinese control were thrown off is not independent nationhood but abject dependence on American arms, money and advisors. One has but to look at the other reactionary and feudal regimes in Asia to see both the reality and meaning of American imperialist domination: the military dictatorships in Pakistan and Thailand, the corrupt "democracies" of Viet Nam and the Philippines, the personal tyrannies in South Korea and Formosa. Not a pretty picture.

The victory of the Chinese Communist government is clearly the progressive choice in the present context. However, to recognize this is not to whitewash that regime. But even in its distorted way it is part of great and positive changes on the Asian mainland, changes that eventually will be the Maoists' own undoing. Through these very achievements the regime will be overthrown by the mass of people anxious to rule their own destinies without the intervention of a privileged elite. That is the future; the Tibetan monk-rulers are the past.

But what about the hue and cry in America? How easily fine words are twisted to meet the needs of American "world leadership"! How morally corrupt our public figures are, men whose political complexion runs the entire respectable spectrum. Nationally a pro-Tibetan committee has been set up ranging in composition from the Formosa lobby mouthpiece, Henry Luce of Life-Time-Fortune, to Norman Thomas, accurately described as "the State Department socialist." At California, the self-styled "Tibetan Brigade" has sprung up and in its publicity seeking fashion faithfully echoes the rhetoric of their elders.

All this noise in a country that backs dictators the world over and as in Guatemala forcibly puts puppets into power with plots staged by the Counter Intelligence Agency. And at a time when, to take a most outstanding example, in Algeria, a whole people have been waging a desperate, bloody war for years against fascist colonials and an imperialist army supplied with American arms.

Here is hypocrisy of world-historic proportions. We socialists say: no thank you! ■

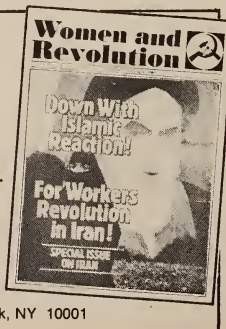
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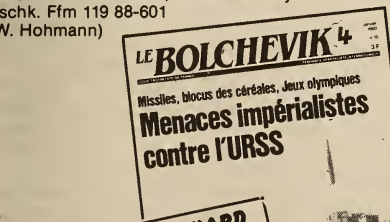
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Singing of the "Internationale" concludes first delegated conference of the iSt.

Forward to the International Trotskyist League

(continued from page 40)

splits and back again, the iSt has grown and grown stronger.

The iSt was formally constituted with the adoption in 1974 of the "Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency" (DOITT) which stated:

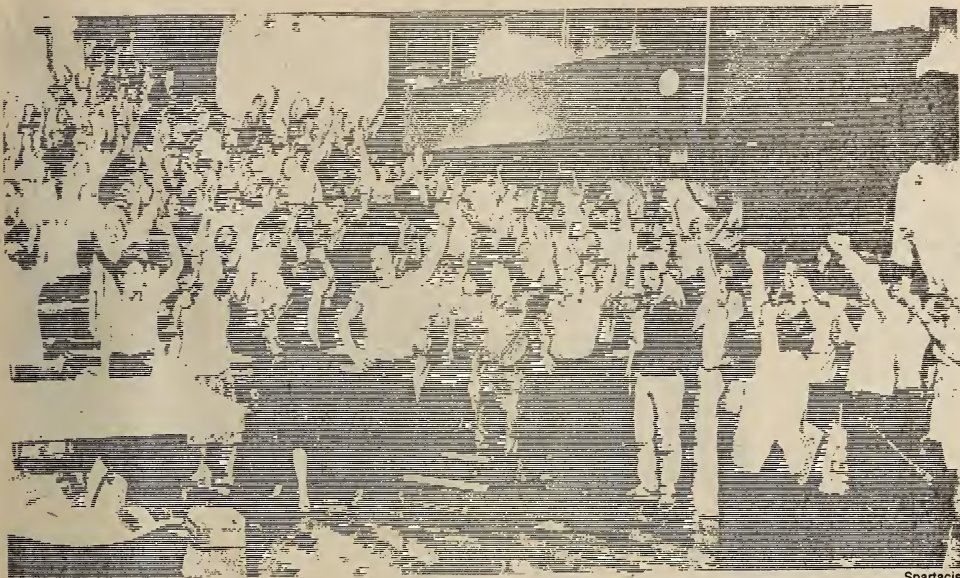
"The international Spartacist tendency is just that, a tendency in the process of consolidation. But from its international outset it declares its continuing fidelity already tested for a decade in national confines to Marxist-Leninist principle and Trotskyist program—Revolutionary, Internationalist and Proletarian. The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long and, above all, uneven...."

This document set forth the programmatic bankruptcy of the various "Fourth Internationals" and committed the signatory organizations to the struggle for an International Trotskyist League in accordance with international democratic centralism. The appendix established an interim organizational structure for the tendency, with the combined Central Committees of the full sections (initially, U.S. and Australia/New Zealand) constituted as an International Executive Committee (IEC) with an interim International Secretariat as its resident executive arm. While recognizing that this formally federated structure could become a brake on the democratic-centralist development of the tendency, we hoped that the election of a fully representative IEC by a delegated international

conference would coincide with the fusion of the iSt—programmatic nucleus of a reborn Fourth International—with some section of cadres drawn from the historic forces of the Trotskyist movement; thus would be founded an International Trotskyist League possessing broader authority among would-be Trotskyist currents.

In the period since the promulgation of DOITT, the tendency has registered considerable international extension. The winning of young Trotskyist cadres in Austria combined with regroupments from German ostensible Trotskyism (mainly from the decomposition products of the left-USec milieu) created the TLD. Recruitment from the USec organizations in Canada and France led to the founding of the TLC and LTF. Spartacist "stations" were established in London and Stockholm. A substantial fusion with forces from the English Workers Socialist League created the SL/B. While these gains did not constitute the qualitative political or geographical expansion to justify the proclamation of an International Trotskyist League, they exacerbated the anomalous situation of a nominally federated leadership structure directing the work of our disciplined democratic-centralist tendency.

In the period prior to the convening of the 1979 conference, the participation of leading comrades, including those from sympathizing sections, in international deliberations had demonstrated the existence of an authoritative leading collective. At the same time, the hard and cohesive political response of all the sections to world events like Iran's "Islamic revolution" increasingly compelled our fake-Trotskyist opponents to recognize the iSt as a united international political entity. An international



Spartacist

conference to elect a representative IEC of the iSt was overdue.

The conference was prepared by national conferences and plenums of the full and sympathizing sections, which elected the voting delegates. Immediately preceding the two-day international conference was a four-day international summer camp which included educational, panels and special commissions (e.g., finances, press, student work).

The conference proper opened with greetings from each national section and from the youth section of the SL/U.S., the Spartacus Youth League. The greetings reported the results of the preparatory national gatherings and outlined the priorities, problems and perspectives for the sections' work. In general, the European organizations confront the related tasks of forging effective national leading collectives, geographical expansion and press stabilization. It was agreed that regular, at least monthly sectional newspapers are crucial propaganda vehicles of an aggressive regroupment tactic of polarizing centrist organizations and winning their subjectively revolutionary forces to the program of authentic Trotskyism.

The pressing tasks in Europe contrast with those of the larger U.S. section which in the course of a dozen years has mainly regrouped its unstable centrist opponents out of effective existence. Thus the SL/U.S. greetings outlined a domestic perspective of more or less individual recruitment through an aggressive drive to turn the tendency's political capital into a couple of hundred new members.

Following the greetings, the conference considered the main political document (reprinted elsewhere in this issue). Particularly in light of the recent USec split, consolidation

of the European organizations is closely linked to the struggle to turn the sections outward toward rapid recruitment to the iSt. The iSt must strip from the Moreno current its new-found "leftist" mantle and win genuine leftists to the one tendency which has consistently opposed Pabloist liquidationism, popular frontism and petty-bourgeois radical impressionism. We must expose Moreno as a free-floating Argentine nationalist/reformist whose present pretenses to "left opposition" are akin to the left face presented by the German Social Democrats whose reformist terrain had been cut out from under them by Hitler's ascension. Now, however, over Afghanistan the Morenoites have shown their true character, stripping off their transient pseudo-left cover. In the name of Third World nationalism they are supporting the imperialist-backed Islamic reactionaries against the Soviet army. If the Morenoites were to succeed in pulling behind them would-be Trotskyists repelled by the rightism of the USec, a verbally centrist roadblock to principled regroupment would undercut iSt opportunities for rapid growth and postpone the construction of authentic revolutionary proletarian nuclei in important countries of Europe and Latin America.

An extremely stimulating session dealt with the question of how the workers movement can confront the problem of massive unemployment in industries which have become redundant not merely through the vicissitudes of the trade cycle (e.g., the worldwide "Great Depression" of 1929) but due to changes in technology creating semi-fossilized industries and/or shifts in the capacity of competing national industries to maintain their share of the world

continued on next page

Spartacist Britain

**Spartacist League/
Britain marching in
Birmingham
demonstration
protesting
victimization of Derek
Robinson, prominent
CP union leader at
British Leyland**



market. In the outmoded steel/coal region of Northwest France/South Belgium or the British automotive industry, for example, the processes of economic change which once carved out these historic proletarian centers from a former peasantry now threaten to pauperize or even lumpenize whole regional sectors of the working class. The revolutionary Marxists must simultaneously defend the real livelihoods and conditions of work of the workers while adamantly refusing to be sucked into taking responsibility for the capitalist economy, no matter how Labourite its governmental label.

The second conference day had been allocated to discussion of a proposal of fusion between the iSt and the Ceylonese RWP. However, the political conduct of the RWP delegates during the camp/conference and their abrupt departure had already made the outcome a foregone conclusion.

"National Communism"

A major outcome of the conference was a definitive political evaluation of the Samarakkody grouping—with which the iSt had maintained a several-year inconclusive fraternal relationship—as an encysted national left-centrist clot. In the course of his long political history, Comrade Samarakkody had pursued a generally honorable course, but—confronted with the challenge of partaking of an international struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International—he proved unable to make the leap.

As Trotsky explained:

"By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historic tasks. Opportunists find international control intolerable and they reduce their international ties as much as possible to harmless formalities... on the proviso that each group does not hinder the others from conducting an opportunist policy to its own national task... International unity is not a decorative façade for us, but the very axis of our theoretical views and our policy."

—L. Trotsky, "The Defense of the Soviet Union and the Opposition," 7 September 1929

Exposure of the Ceylonese delegation's retreat from the RWP's previous protestations of deepening convergence with the program of the iSt was a central focus of the conference. We had hoped that such convergence could provide the basis for turning the RWP away from narrow preoccupation with the popular-front parliamentary milieu in Ceylon—a milieu which is itself in disrepair in the aftermath of electoral rout—and toward the opportunities indicated by the growth of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)—People's Liberation Front—(whose 1971 radical youth uprising was drowned in blood by the popular-front government) and the unrest among Sri Lanka's nationally oppressed Tamil population. But the RWP delegation chose to break from the conference rather than break its nostalgic links to the stinking corpse of the reformist Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP).

In typically centrist fashion, Comrade Samarakkody as the main spokesman for the RWP delegation sought to duck politics, hiding behind the filibuster as his main technique. In a studied effort to avoid the real issues, he turned everything into a question of prestige and imagined insult. In his conduct toward the conference he showed himself to stand in the tradition of Andrés Nin, Hugo Urbahns, Henk Sneevliet and Guillermo Lora—"national communist" veteran leaders who could be pretty orthodox under sealed-off conditions, only to reveal their orthodoxy as essentially hollow in the face of historic questions expressed concretely. Though we are not given to comparing ourselves to Trotsky, in this case a look at the correspondence between Trotsky and Andrés Nin shows an even uncanny similarity to the exchanges between the iSt conference delegates and Samarakkody, with the former insisting on sharp political characterization while the latter protested about "tone" in a real or spurious display of hurt pride.

This exposure did not come cheap. The iSt had been loosely associated with Edmund Samarakkody for a number of years. In 1971 he first wrote us that "speaking for myself, I am generally in agreement with your

orientation on some matters of importance to the Trotskyist movement." Further correspondence resulted in a literary collaboration to publicize the USec's suppression of the reports of a special commission (convened at Samarakkody's insistence at the USec's April 1969 Congress) on Bala Tampoe, whose position as head of the USec's Ceylon section is merely the "socialist" cover for his activities as top bureaucrat of a large white-collar trade union (see "The Case of Bala Tampoe," *Spartacist* No. 21, Fall 1972). The collaboration continued with *Spartacist's* publication of Samarakkody's "The Struggle for Trotskyism in Ceylon" (*Spartacist* No. 22, Winter 1973-74) and later with occasional articles for *Workers Vanguard*.

But our main interest was in exploring the evident programmatic differences between our tendency and the Samarakkody group with the aim of determining whether a sufficient programmatic basis existed for an eventual fusion between our organizations. We knew this would not be an easy determination to make. We understood that the RWP presented itself to us always in its most leftist light and that its repeated ignoring of our requests for RWP published and internal materials (e.g., minutes) was no accident. It was only through painfully expensive visits to Sri Lanka—perhaps half a dozen in as many years—that any real sense was gained of the perspectives and work of the RWP.

Most of the early discussions centered on the national question and the Samarakkody group's sharp opposition to our line of revolutionary defeatism on both sides in the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. The RWP's evident softness toward "progressive" nationalist formations in backward countries placed a big question mark over its ability to pose a class-against-class line in Ceylon, where popular-frontist

blocs with the "left"-bourgeois formations against the "pro-imperialist" bourgeois party have besmirched the name of ostensible Trotskyism.

That the RWP had made more than a formal effort to repudiate popular frontism was clear from the courageous action of Samarakkody and another leader of his group, Meryl Fernando, who had on 3 December 1964, as LSSP Members of Parliament, participated in a vote of no-confidence in the government, over the objections of the class collaborators and their left tails who blamed Edmund and Meryl for the fall of "their" government. In the sequel, the comrades proved unable to defend their principled action against the popular-front apologists who of course charged them with "aiding the right." The incident and its aftermath are described in the box on this page.

In 1974, after a protracted visa fight, the iSt succeeded in bringing two RWP comrades to North America and Europe for formal discussions. The results led to a distancing. The hard line drawn in the debates on the national question was compounded by a pervasive skepticism emanating from the RWP over the Spartacist League's self-description as a "propaganda group"—a skepticism we interpreted as an accusation of sectarianism, diplomatically worded (and this from a "party" of a dozen members!). It was in the course of these discussions that we first became aware that the RWP had, eight years after the fact, disavowed the 1964 vote and had actually used the analogy of the 1931 "Red Referendum" in Prussia where the Stalinists had made a bloc with the Nazis to bring down the Social Democratic government. Not only is the rightist United National Party not a fascist party, but the Sri Lanka Freedom Party—unlike the social democracy—is not a

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1964: Samarakkody vs. the Popular Front

"In 1964 when the popular front came in, it came in on a very narrow majority; a right wing of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party broke away; and through a series of maneuvers, the throne speech—which is the principal address containing the intended program of the popular front—was voted down on an amendment by an independent rightist who had been primed by the UNP [United National Party]. It was a very nice amendment, by the way. It said: we condemn this incoming government which has failed to protect the living standards of the working masses. The two comrades of the parliamentary fraction of the LSSP(R) [Lanka Samasamaja Party (Revolutionary)], namely Edmund [Samarakkody] and Meryl [Fernando] [both later of the RWP], voted for the amendment. But, lo and behold, everybody else in the room suddenly voted for the amendment and the government didn't fall, but it got a vote of no confidence, and it chose to turn that into a new election. And immediately the old LSSP turned to Edmund and Meryl and said: you turned the country over to fascist, imperialist, CIA capitalism and what are they paying you for it?... And they felt this keenly, because while they had conducted themselves in a

principled way, they were still very much in the milieu of the LSSP.

"But they were stuck, they'd made this vote and they defended it for nearly ten years; but then they wanted to back away and said it was a tactical mistake. At exactly the time that the youth were being murdered by the popular front, the Tamils were hating the popular front, all those forces that wanted a change in society despised the popular front... our comrades could look only at the LSSP....

"So in adversity, our comrades were very principled and strong and forthright, but given a little opportunity, because there was a split in the LSSP, they said: oh, it was a tactical mistake....

"If the comrades in Ceylon can be made to see the contradiction between what they did and their positions—remember, they *did* it; it's not something we are trying to shove down their throats that they should have done—that tends to unwind all of their tailing after the popular fronts."

—Report of the iSt Delegation to Sri Lanka to the New York local of the SL/U.S., 8 July 1979

Popular Frontism vs. the Tamil People

"... To what extent has that section of the Ceylonese Trotskyist movement... which opposed the drift to the 1964 [LSSP] betrayal, split over it, and then unlike all the other splitters actually sought to transcend the 'old', 'good' LSSP, actually done so? That the RWP has done so to a degree is clear but this is a qualitative matter and dependent upon both clear formal program and living practice....

"...It would seem that the question of the Tamil minority in Ceylon is of triple importance. First the immigrant-descended Tamil laborers on the plantations producing for the world market are the primary creators of value and are by that fact alone central to a proletarian revolutionary perspective.... Second, the struggle by the Leninist vanguard against Sinhalese chauvinism among the laboring masses of the dominant ethnic majority can be no less a precondition for successful revolution than the struggle against Great Russian chauvinism was for the Bolsheviks. Third, for the sake of the extension of the revolution, the laboring population of at least South India may well take the treatment of the Indian-derived Tamils as the key test as to the genuineness of Ceylonese revolutionary intentions.

"But after the 1950 LSSP reunification we have seen virtually no recognition of these considerations.... Instead we note as the alternative consummated by the LSSP the succession of: a national horizon, a parliamentary focus, conciliation to 'anti-imperialist' Sinhalese communalist chauvinism, class collabora-

tion, overt betrayal, complicity in counterrevolutionary butchery. For revolutionists, a principled class-struggle domestic line would be an intolerable contradiction in the absence of an energetically pursued internationalist policy reflected internally in the question of the Tamil plantation proletariat and the struggle against Sinhalese chauvinism, necessarily the prime cause of communalism....

"...To have approached the Sri Lanka Freedom Party in November 1951 for a no-contest agreement on the grounds of that party's verbal radicalism was, from the standpoint of the permanent revolution and the concrete perspective of proletarian revolution on the island, already a crime. The key agitation of the SLFP was, of course, 'Sinhala Only'. From the standpoint of the Tamil plantation workers it is impossible to see the SLFP as the kind of 'lesser evil' with which revolutionists would sign no-contest agreements....

"Something should be said about the April 1971 uprising of Sinhalese youth organized by the JVP.... That such an uprising, evidently conspiratorially prepared over a period of time, could come as an abrupt surprise to all sections of established Ceylonese political life would appear as an indictment of both the socially remote and artificial character of the parliamentary milieu and the fixation of all previously established political elements upon it."

—Letter to Samarakkody, 27 October 1973, reprinted in [iSt] *International Discussion Bulletin* No. 3, May 1974

part of the workers movement, but simply a left-talking nationalist/chauvinist bourgeois formation. Although one can discuss whether a smarter tactic might have been found than a vote over a pro-working-class motion hypocritically proposed by a rightist, the RWP's discomfort with its principled stance of 1964 placed a major question mark over the Ceylonese comrades' ability to withstand the pervasive pressures of popular frontism and suggested an affirmative answer to the question: Is it ever proper to register a vote of confidence in a bourgeois popular-front government?

The RWP's reversal of its "correct verdict" of 1964 is even more egregious in the light of the wholesale massacre of Ceylonese youth carried out by the popular-front government in response to the 1971 JVP-led uprising. Mrs. Bandaranaike's mass butchery exposed before the Ceylonese masses what revolutionists should have known in their guts: that a popular front is not a half-step toward socialism, but a capitalist regime deserving of no support. The iSt has stood alone in the world movement in refusing to vote for the parties—including the working-class parties—of popular fronts. The RWP's later rejection of this position, and of the principled stand of 1964, seemed to put period to any possibility of fundamental rapprochement between the RWP and the iSt.

Though the 1974 discussions ended in an impasse, we continued a fraternal relationship with the RWP, including an (extremely one-sided) "exchange" of publications and

selected internal materials and the publication of an *International Discussion Bulletin* (No. 7, March 1977) containing two lengthy documents by the iSt and a reply by Comrade Samarakkody.

So we were perplexed when we received a letter dated 10 April 1979 informing us that the February 10 RWP conference, after "a lengthy discussion," had decided to "seek to join" the iSt—all the more so as we had not been asked to submit so much as greetings to the conference nor even informed that the question of fusion was being considered. On April 28 we wrote the RWP that:

"As with all sections and candidates for fusion we would need to have a mutual sense of assurance—in a programmatically definable way—that the Ceylonese comrades seek proletarian revolution in Ceylon and in South Asia. If these two considerations exist—the determination to act in concert internationally and the programmatically expressed appetite to seek proletarian revolution—then there is a basis for a valid fusion."

We proposed that an authoritative iSt delegation should visit Ceylon for discussions.

In late spring, a delegation of four iSt comrades from North America and one from South Asia went to Sri Lanka. The delegation and the RWP leadership agreed to a Unification Agreement (20 June) which noted that because of "both the extent of the political differences, the extreme geographical distances, and cultural and standard of living divergences involved, never has a more difficult unification been attempted involving the iSt and another organiza-

tion." Despite RWP amendments to water down the key formulations, the final draft still noted the political obstacles to a valid unification:

"Politically and as an extreme characterisation the RWP could see elements of sectarian ultra-leftism in the iSt, centering upon at best indifference to national struggles of the oppressed, and willful ineffectuality in approaching the masses and in party building. The iSt for its part could perceive, as an extreme characterisation, the RWP as partaking at least in part of a centrism which tails petty-bourgeois nationalism and gives critical support to the worst aspects of revisionism and reformism, while in its own propaganda is largely unable to transcend mere democratic demands."

On the basis of this document, a perspective of unification was adopted. In its report to the New York local on July 10, the iSt delegation explained:

"If these comrades were kids, we wouldn't touch them with a ten foot pole. But they are absolutely the very most evolved, principled best of old Ceylonese Trotskyism—which was terrible...."

In the expectation of unification, we arranged to bring a three-man RWP delegation to the iSt international conference. We reiterated our requests for minutes and other RWP materials. Two iSt comrades undertook a crash course in Sinhala. The conference agenda was prepared with the RWP unification proposal expected to be its central point.

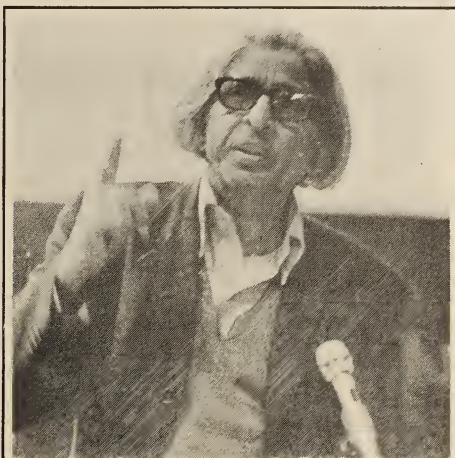
The National Question Comes Home

However the political conduct of the RWP delegation to the iSt conference was characterized by out-and-out refusal to seek the mutual political interpenetration which all claimed to agree was key to a valid international unification. The Ceylonese delegates held themselves aloof from most of the deliberations and—in the few instances where they actively participated in the proceedings—made no attempt to struggle for a common international line. Instead of seeking to win the iSt membership to their criticisms of the iSt majority line, they shamelessly evaded the issues, seeking to turn the iSt's sharp political characterizations of their positions into imagined slights on their personal integrity.

This was their "method" in the panel discussion on popular frontism. The two iSt reporters sought to place the question in an international historical context, pointing to the Bolsheviks' policy in February-October 1917 as the definitive example. Precedents were also noted from both the Second and Third Internationals; the experience of the European Trotskyists in the 1930s was analyzed and

lessons drawn from the case of Ceylon (transcripts of these presentations are printed elsewhere in this issue).

Yet Comrade Samarakkody, the reporter for the RWP, restricted his remarks solely to the question of Ceylon, ignoring in an absurdly parochial manner the historical material presented as well as the numerous recent instances



Spartacist

Edmund Samarakkody speaking at panel discussion on popular frontism.

where popular frontism has been a key test of the Trotskyist program (Chile, France, Portugal, etc.). And in his defense of the RWP's line on Ceylon, Comrade Samarakkody ducked politics by pretending to understand hard political characterization—that the RWP in the last analysis sees itself as part of a parliamentarist popular-front "left" continuum—only as personal insult. Thus: "how can anyone say about Edmund such things," "have we not always said we were against the popular front?"

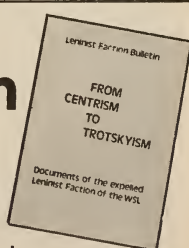
The RWP delegates devoted most of their speaking time to professing shock at an iSt reporter's statement that during the RWP/iSt discussions in Ceylon in July, RWP leaders had admitted that it was pressure from a 1972 left split from the LSSP which caused the RWP to publicly disavow its 1964 vote eight years after the fact. Oh

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Workers Vanguard

Black autoworkers participating in SL/U.S.-organized Rally Against Klan Terror held in Detroit, November 1979.

comrades, said the RWP, this is terrible, slanderous; nothing like that was ever said. On the face of it, then, it would seem very strange that the RWP did not object earlier. When the iSt delegation returned from Ceylon, a report was made before the New York local of the SL/U.S. on 8 July. A transcript prepared for the information of our membership and sent as well to the RWP contained the statement: "In adversity, our comrades were very principled and strong and forthright, but given a little opportunity, because there was a split in the LSSP, they said: oh, it was a tactical mistake...."

But not so strange. Apparently the popular frontism panel really brought home to the RWP leaders what was told them from the beginning: the international democratic centrism of the iSt does not permit diplomatic political passivity toward the public line and work of any section, a Ceylon section included. So Comrade Samarakkody's next act was to indulge in a shameful provocation. Having participated at our invitation in a Control Commission convoked at the request of the Australian comrades to investigate serious disciplinary charges against a former leading member of the section, Comrade Samarakkody professed himself unable to draw any conclusions from the evidence while disingenuously denying any intention of impugning the veracity of the numerous witnesses and depositions. This ugly conduct only revealed the RWP's fear of making a clear political break from the conference.

By this point the delegates had recognized that fusion was not possible at this conference. But as serious Marxists, far from wanting to break off the debates, we sought to use the opportunity obtained at enormous effort and expense to exchange opinions. However, before the main agenda point on Ceylon began, the RWP delegation simply informed us that "the atmosphere was not

propitious for fusion," packed its bags and left. Thus the RWP threw away an opportunity to argue for its brand of "Trotskyism" before hundreds of Trotskyists—an opportunity to call on the ranks of the iSt to oust their "sectarian" leadership, for example—showing thereby that its leaders were guided by the narrowest preoccupation with maneuvers. After long years of honorable if partial struggle against the revisionism which has destroyed the reputation of ostensible Trotskyism in Ceylon, the founding leaders of the RWP have shown that they are used up.

Despite the cowardly walkout of the RWP, the conference discussion on Ceylon was clarifying. The RWP "came here perhaps not knowing that they had to choose between the LSSP and the iSt," said a delegate from the French section. "They found out. And they chose," she said. Another delegate reported on an informal discussion between two iSt women and members of the RWP delegation, where the latter showed that the oft-repeated RWP self-criticisms over its lack of Tamil and female members had been merely sops to the iSt bearing no relationship to the RWP's real political choices:

"Women attend their study classes, but the woman question has not been raised there. They do not see the need for special work to draw women into union activity (35 percent of [one of the RWP representative's] union are women). They asserted that since it took 4-5 times as much work to recruit a woman than a man, it would be a priority to recruit four or five men...women would come around in a period of class upsurge."

Another delegate rose to rhetorically inquire:

"What would it mean if we applied this method to U.S. blacks, who are five times as hard to recruit and five times as much trouble inside when you do recruit them? Perhaps we should direct all our efforts at white Americans and just expect blacks to rally around us in a revolutionary upsurge?"

It was also pointed out that the RWP pamphlet on the Tamil question ("Tamil Minority Question and the Revolutionary Workers Party") is purely civil libertarian and does not transcend democratic demands.

Comrades who had been studying Sinhala in anticipation of a fusion played an active role in the discussion. One reported on a three-part RWP article on Iran ("The People's Revolutionary Uprising in Iran," *Panthei Patana*, 15 January, 1 February and 15 February 1979) which gave the lie to the RWP's repeated claims it agreed with the iSt position of no support to the pro-Khomeini mobilizations. Another gave a graphic illustration of the RWP's fixation on parliamentarism: "The RWP has 12 full and 6 candidate members. So they ran for parliament—18 candidates!"

But the RWP, having beaten its cowardly retreat, was not there to respond. And in the months since the conference we have not heard a substantive political word from the RWP leadership, much less an evaluation of the conference and justification of their break from it.

The Struggle for the Continuity of Revolutionary Trotskyism

When the RWP delegates beat their cowardly retreat from the iSt conference, they showed that their professed internationalism was only skin deep. They had sought, not a genuine interpenetration, but an alliance for ceremonial purposes which leaves all partners free to pursue their national aspirations without interference from a living international collective. Ceylon is a small island where everybody has international ties; even a trade-union ultra-reformist like Bala Tampoe finds it worthwhile to be associated with the USec. It would appear that the Samarakkody group has even sought to exaggerate its connection to the iSt. Thus Ceylon's leading English-language journal of radical opinion, the *Lanka Guardian*, reflected the conventional belief when it referred to "Mr. Edmund Samarakkody's group which is affiliated to the Spartacist League faction of the world Trotskyite move-

ment" (1 November 1978). But the iSt has no desire for "sections" whose national practice would make a mockery of our international democratic centralism. The RWP will have to look elsewhere for partners in that kind of enterprise.

The RWP is the organic left wing of the old LSSP. The LSSP today is rightly despised by the Ceylonese masses as part and parcel of Mrs. Bandaranaike's coalition government which ground the economy down to penury while slaughtering thousands of radicalized youth. But for the RWP, the rout of the popular front at the polls is seen as the end of left politics in Ceylon. If there's nothing leftist going on in parliament, therefore there's nothing going on, though the JVP can pull 50,000 people to a Colombo May Day march. It is tragic that on an island where ostensible Trotskyism has historically had a mass following, the young neo-Stalinists of the JVP now appear as the symbols of militant opposition to the popular front.

The Samarakkody group is the concretization of the observation that no national revolutionary current can pursue an authentic revolutionary course in protracted isolation from the struggle to build a world party. From the time of our inception as a tendency, the American nucleus of the iSt struggled to break out of enforced national isolation. Through this lengthy process we came to see that the main international currents of ostensible Trotskyism were fundamentally programmatically moribund. Thus we adopted the perspective of fighting for the "rebirth" of the Fourth International rather than its reshuffling ("reconstruction").

Yet we were aware that there existed local groupings which had not been firmly bound to the liquidationist program of Pabloism, and we tried to engage them. We looked the longest at the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste, a purported continuator of the 1951-53 struggle for orthodox Trotskyism, because it was the largest repository of cadre dating back to the Trotskyist movement of Trotsky's time, in the hope that some section of that cadre would break on essentials from that

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Militants of the
Trotzkiistische Liga
Deutschlands
marching in Frankfurt
on May Day, 1979.

Kommunistische Korrespondenz



organization's rightward course. But there was no crack in the OCI cadre when the organization's Stalinophobic apologetics for CIA-backed social democracy in Portugal revealed the OCI as having—like the American SWP—qualitatively degenerated from anti-Pabloist orthodoxy to reformist appetite.

Our long fraternal experience with the Ceylonese comrades of the Samarakkody group was our most notable effort to find, in the words of James P. Cannon, "the initiating cadres of the new organization in the old." This grouping's last decisive revolutionary act took place in 1964, just at the time of the founding of the organizationally independent Spartacist tendency in the U.S. Had we been capable of forcefully intersecting the Ceylonese comrades at that time, it is conceivable that they might have been won to authentic Trotskyism. But the 40 or so Americans who made up our tendency at that time would have had little authority in the eyes of former leaders of a mass-based party.

Since the emergence from the American SWP of that fragment of Trotskyist continuity which founded our tendency, the iSt has won from ostensibly Trotskyist organizations many youthful militants, but not the veteran fighters whose experience could have helped shape the new generation of revolutionists. We do not regret, therefore, that we undertook to go through this experience of political clarification with the RWP. If it had gone favorably, it would have had incalculable political value for the reconstitution of an authentic revolutionary international—and in any case it could not have been left unresolved.

We Go Forward

The first plenum of the International Executive Committee elected at the conference centered on discussion

of how to exploit the iSt's unique Trotskyist position of "Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!" to forcefully confront the fake-lefts who made themselves complicit in the Persian-chauvinist Khomeini theocracy's assaults on the national minorities, oil workers, landless peasants and women of Iran.

Additionally, as we pointed out in the conference document:

"Carter's 'human rights' campaign, reviving the rhetoric of the Cold War in order to morally re-arm U.S. imperialism after Vietnam and Watergate, has conditioned a rapid shift to the right on the part of the ostensible Trotskyist movement....

"The USec majority has most recently embraced the anti-Soviet parliamentary cretinism of the Eurocommunists.... The OCI has now become essentially reformist. Thus the USec majority's abandonment of even formal obeisance to the Trotskyist position on the Russian question leaves to the iSt alone the heritage of Soviet defensism."

Carter's intimations of World War III over Afghanistan—which demand an unequivocal military defense of the Soviet Union against U.S. imperialism—fully and dramatically vindicate this statement. The pseudo-Trotskyists lurch from one line to another mumbling that somehow the Afghan mullahs are less "progressive" than their brothers across the Iranian border. Our forthright slogans "Hail Red Army!", "Extend Social Gains of October Revolution to Afghan Peoples!" sharply raise our political profile as the Trotskyist alternative to centrist confusionism or outright support to imperialist anti-Sovietism.

But these developments—combined with regroupment opportunities presented by the unanticipated factional realignments of the USec split—severely tax the capacities of especially our European propaganda groups. Nor are the objective possibilities for iSt regroupments limited to polarizations within the various warring wings of ostensible Trotskyism. In Germany and England particularly, any



Workers Vanguard

New York, February 1980: Spartacus Youth League answers Carter's war drive head on, not pacifism but Soviet defensism.

notion of "left Maoism" has become completely untenable as the Chinese bureaucracy rushes to outdo the Christian Democrats and Tories in anti-Soviet bellicosity. Now more than ever we must seek to intervene in the "crisis of Maoism." Even some of the reformist pro-Moscow Communist parties have taken on a more militant anti-NATO posture which could augur greater receptivity at the base to the Trotskyist program of defense of the gains of October through political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucratic castes and socialist revolution against capitalism. If our overburdened propaganda groups allow this panoply of opportunities to pass us by, history will not be kindly in its verdict.

In this context, our European sections have neither the forces nor the mass links to maintain more than an external and episodic presence in key class battles, such as the present British steel strike which strains to break out of the control of the Labourite union tops. Paradoxically the American SL/U.S., which struggled for a decade to break out of deforming national isolation, is now, in its capacity for selective agitation, a balance to the European sections whose overwhelming task must remain communist propaganda and regroupment struggles. The modest trade-union implantation of the SL/U.S. and its deepening experience among black working people (an oppressed color-caste and in a sense America's closest approximation to an internal colony) are a slender but crucial cord grounding the European sections in living struggles.

But Europe and America are not the world. The iSt's concentration in industrialized nations is an evident weakness which must be transcended before the International Trotskyist League, programmatic nucleus of a reborn Fourth International, can emerge. An effort to cohere a communist nucleus from among Iranian leftists shaken by the bloody consequences of tailing Shi'ite clerical reaction must proceed through the patient labor of circulating Persian-language Spartacist materials among émigrés and foreign students. We must carry our fight against the left-centrism of the Samarakkody group into Sri Lanka itself. The rebirth of the Fourth International requires a struggle to root a communist presence in Japan and South Asia, the Near East, Latin America, South Africa and the degenerated and deformed workers states.

Our forces are small in proportion to our aim, which is to consummate proletarian revolution pervasively on this planet. Yet it is only the authentic revolutionary program of the iSt which can politically arm the proletariat for the conquest of state power on a world scale. No wing of the USec or ex-USec even approximates a Trotskyist perspective; indeed, the program of the centrist "London Bureau" of the 1930s looks good by comparison. In the aftermath of split, centrists remaining within the USec camp will find themselves wedded ever more closely to the reformist American SWP, while leftist elements who followed Moreno because his bonapartist maneuverism availed itself of a leftist pretext in splitting over Nicaragua must now clearly see the true nature of the Moreno/OCI bloc displayed over support to the anti-Communist Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan. These new alliances are built on sand; they are cynical and profoundly anti-internationalist. Only the iSt's Leninist struggle for principled international unity based on program can unite the workers of the world in the fight for international revolution. ■

The Test of Time

U.S. imperialism's declaration of "Cold War II" over Afghanistan is dramatic confirmation that the iSt has alone upheld the revolutionary heritage of Leninism. This new conjuncture is a brutal shock to the fake-lefts who tailed Carter's "human rights" rhetoric, ignoring its anti-Soviet cutting edge; who ignored or apologized for China's sinister alliance with American imperialism against the USSR: who, in short, thought they could ignore the centrality of the "Russian question"—in particular the obligation of proletarian internationalists to militantly oppose imperialism's implacable revanchist appetite to reverse the gains of October. Equally it exposes as cynics and frauds the "Marxists" who fed the flames of anti-Communist Islamic reaction with their paeans to Khomeini's theocratic "mass movement." While the opportunists and impressionists rush to cover their tracks, the iSt stands on its record, which has stood the test of time.

1969

"At the present time, the Vietnam war and the extreme diplomatic and internal difficulties of the Chinese state have forced the Maoists to maintain greater hostility to imperialism and verbally disclaim the USSR's avowed policy of 'peaceful coexistence' while themselves peacefully coexisting with Japan. However, we must warn against the growing objective possibility—given the tremendous industrial and military capacity of the Soviet Union—of a U.S. deal with China." [original emphasis]

—"Development and Tactics of the Spartacist League [U.S.],"
Marxist Bulletin No. 9,
Part II, 30 August 1969

1977

"We repeat the warning we have sounded since the beginning of Carter's 'human rights' ploy: behind the liberal rhetoric stands the threat of imperialist war, principally directed against the Soviet Union."

—"The Main Enemy Is at Home,"
Workers Vanguard No. 163, 24 June 1977

1978

"But what is the political basis of the current opposition to the shah?... fundamentally the current mass mobilizations against the Pahlavi family are under the ideological sway of Muslim fundamentalists.... The victory of a reactionary movement of Muslim traditionalism will represent a far-reaching historical defeat for communists, who seek a revolutionary emancipation from semi-feudal backwardness. The religious opposition stands on the heritage of the Middle Ages, opposed even to the paltry social advances for women in the past decades." [original emphasis]

—"Down with the Shah, Down with the Mullahs—Iran in Turmoil,"
Workers Vanguard
No. 215, 22 September 1978

Reply to Our Critics

No "Critical Support" to Popular Frontism

At the first delegated conference of the international Spartacist tendency a discussion was held on the question of revolutionary electoral policy toward workers parties participating in popular-front coalitions. Below are edited presentations and summaries given by Comrades Jan Norden and James Robertson.

Presentation by Norden:

Comrades, the question of the electoral policy of Bolsheviks toward the popular front has been presented by the United Secretariat as simply a tactical question, and we have become known over the last period for our position that this is a central, strategic question especially in this period.

There's a quotation from a letter by Trotsky to the Dutch section saying that the popular front "is the *main question for proletarian class strategy* for this epoch" and "the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism" ["The Dutch Section and the International," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1935-36)*]. As you'll notice, different passages from this quote keep reappearing in our press. I'd like to just mention tonight two other things that are in the same key quotation. One is that Trotsky takes on not only those who directly support the popular front but also those who "present this question as a tactical or even as a technical maneuver, so as to be able to peddle their wares in the shadow of the Popular Front." And second is that he presents as "the greatest historical example of the Popular Front" Russia in 1917, from February to October. That's where to look for the Bolshevik precedent on this question.

Now, we have very little time, so I would like to concentrate on the essentials. And the main point I think we have to make here is that giving electoral support to the so-called "workers parties of the popular front" is, in fact, the policy of critical support—so-called "critical support"—to popular fronts coming from reformists and centrists who make claim to the tradition of Trotskyism. In other words, they want to give "critical support" to the popular front without openly, directly and demonstrably crossing the class line, so they give "critical support" to the workers parties of the popular front. In effect, this policy calls on the workers to put a *bourgeois* political formation into office. It calls for votes to the mass parties of the popular front. In many cases, as much as 95 percent of all the votes for the popular front in fact go to the workers parties of the popular front. This was the case in Chile in 1970, also in France in the early 1970s, and classically in Spain where Trotsky was constantly referring to the bourgeois component of the People's Front as the "shadow of the bourgeoisie." And, as Trotsky said about the popular-frontist policy of the POUM, "*There can be no*

greater crime than coalition with the bourgeoisie in a period of socialist revolution" ["No Greater Crime," in *The Spanish Revolution (1931-39)*].

Now, in order to justify this policy, opportunists frequently use many sophisticated arguments essentially to deny that the popular front is, in fact, a bourgeois political formation. The Mandelites denied that the French Union of the Left, or the Chilean Unidad Popular government headed by Allende, was a popular front in order to carry out their policy of voting for the workers parties of the popular front. Another argument used is that a popular front is essentially the same as a social-democratic labor party in power, especially in an imperialist country. By glossing over the capitalist class character of the popular front they, in effect, tell the workers: "Look, these people are part of our class and you can demand of them anything. They, of course, are betrayers and will attempt to deny the just demands of the workers, but it is historically possible for them to go beyond the limits of capitalism to crush fascism and stop imperialist war and so on." Now this is the argument that is used. But in fact the popular front, because it is a bourgeois formation, because its program must necessarily be that of the most so-called "moderate" elements who are the bourgeois components of the popular front, cannot go beyond the bounds of capitalism. And by helping to place the popular front in power, those who give electoral support to its candidates share responsibility for setting up a roadblock to revolution and fostering the victory of reaction. So for us it is a central question and not simply a tactical maneuver of a secondary order.

This has been a constant difference between us and the United Secretariat and various centrists over the past years. But it has become particularly important again in light of the prospect of a unification between the international Spartacist tendency and the Revolutionary Workers Party of Sri Lanka. In this projected unification certainly the clearest outstanding and currently expressed area of difference is precisely over whether it is principled and correct to give electoral support to *any* party of the popular front, which is as we see this question. Comrade Robertson wrote in his letter to Comrade Samarakody expressing the central importance of raising class criteria and not simply "progressive vs. reactionary" criteria. And in the supplementary letter by myself and Comrade Sharpe we stressed the central importance for Trotskyists that any electoral tactic must express the fundamental Marxist principle of the political independence of the proletariat. So, I don't want to go back to those points, I want to make a couple of other observations.

The first one is about Russia in 1917. Frequently, the example of the Bolshevik slogan of "Down with the ten capitalist ministers" is raised by those who argue for electoral support to the bourgeois workers parties

participating in a popular front. And this is also the case with the RWP and I think that frequently this is seen as an argument against us because of a misunderstanding—or, as it may be, a willful misinterpretation—of what we mean when we say that in a popular front the contradiction within the bourgeois workers parties has been suppressed. In the late 1930s then-comrade Shachtman wrote an article on the Spanish elections in which he put our view of this quite clearly. He said when the workers parties joined the popular front, “politically speaking, they appeared before the masses in *one party with the bourgeoisie*” [“The Spanish Elections and the People’s Front,” *New Militant*, 14 March 1936]. And he underlined that and stressed it. The demand of the Bolsheviks in 1917 was that *if* the Mensheviks broke and the Left SRs broke from their bourgeois allies in the Provisional Government and from the officer corps and formed a government based on the Soviet, *then* they would support them against reaction—but *only* then. And that is exactly what our policy of conditional opposition to these reformist and centrist parties in a popular front consists of: it’s saying that *if* you break with the popular front, *then* we can consider a policy of critical support to your candidate, but not until.

Now, the second observation is that this was not a constant policy of the Bolsheviks. From July until late August they did not raise this policy at a time when the Mensheviks and Kerensky were placing themselves at the spearhead of reaction and reactionary repression.¹ [Nor did the Bolsheviks use this tactic after they obtained a majority in the Petrograd Soviet, from mid-September on.] As one comrade said, “When the communists have a majority in the working population or in the Soviets, we are unconditionally opposed to electoral coalitionism with anybody.”

The third observation is this, comrades: when you go up to the ballot box or tell workers what to do at the ballot box, it is not simply an electoral question. A government is going to come out of that. And a bourgeois popular-front government at a time of working-class upsurge is a ticket for fascism, it’s a ticket for imperialist war. If you haven’t warned the workers in advance that this is what electing that popular front is going to mean, you’re complicit in what follows. The key task of the Marxists is to prepare the proletariat so it can resist false friends and see who its true enemies are.

Now Russia in 1917 was not a case of bourgeois parliamentarism, but [the question of coalitionism, of popular frontism, was a central question nonetheless. And] if the Bolsheviks had flinched—well, they did flinch, actually, once they did and the second time they almost did—but if that had been the dominant policy there would have been no October Revolution.²

OK, two other quick points. People frequently say that in the 1930s the Trotskyists did not have our policies in France. Undoubtedly this will come up in the discussion



Kerensky and his entourage.

period. But I would like to call attention to the way Trotsky formulated the question in 1921 in his messages to the French party [see “On the United Front,” in *The First Five Years of the Comintern*, Vol. 2]. He said that *if*—again, he presented it as a precondition—the Dissidents agreed to break the Left Bloc with the bourgeoisie, then we can talk about united front tactics with the Communist Party. But only in that circumstance.

And then finally, on the RWP explicitly: what we find most disturbing and potentially an opening in your own views is the contradiction between your policy or your stated policy of wanting to give electoral support to the workers parties of the popular front on the one hand, and on the other hand taking the necessary step for any Bolshevik of voting against the bourgeois popular-front government. Now there may be questions of tactics but the vote to bring down the Bandaranaike coalition government [of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the ex-Trotskyist Lanka Samasamaja Party] in 1964 was obligatory for any true Bolshevik or Trotskyist. And we find that courageous act one which we stand on, which we have claimed as our own in some of the documents preparing for

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¹As Trotsky wrote, “The slogan ‘Power to the Soviets’ from now on meant armed insurrection against the government and those military cliques which stood behind it. But to raise an insurrection in the cause of ‘Power to the Soviets’ when the soviets did not want the power, was obvious nonsense” (*History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. 2, Ch. 13, “The Bolsheviks and the Soviets”).

²Before Lenin returned to Russia in April, *Pravda* under the direction of Kamenev and Stalin adopted a policy of conditional support to the Lvov coalition government (the notorious support “insofar as . . .”). Lenin had to wage a sharp struggle against that policy, which he regarded as a principled difference. And in October, Zinoviev and Kamenev opposed taking power without a coalition with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who however were tied to a “popular front” with Kerensky, Kornilov and the Cadets. Again Lenin threatened split. Far from giving any political support, however critical, to the coalition, Lenin’s strategy from April until the October insurrection was precisely to struggle for the overthrow of the popular front by the soviets.

this conference. We find that act in contradiction to your present stated views, or the ones in your last letter on the subject.

Presentation by Robertson:

In 1966, on behalf of the Spartacist League of the United States, I sought to make a statement to an international conference [the London Conference of Healy's International Committee], a statement comparable in unpopularity to that which Comrade Edmund just made. (laughter) We trust that the sequel will be qualitatively different. (laughter) Now would be an appropriate time to reveal the secret codicil to the articles of agreement that were worked out in Sri Lanka a couple of months ago. We agreed to turn over to the RWP the names of our opportunists if they gave us the names of their sectarians. (laughter)

Now, my remarks are subsumed generally under the title, as I put it down, of "Electoral Coalitionism and the Communists." I first want to touch on a point that needs to be hammered out in the incoming International Executive Committee, but I'd certainly like to sketch a view in a sentence or two. As is perfectly clear to everyone who heard Comrade Samarakkody, in every subjective sense [he expressed] intense hostility and opposition to the popular-front governments in Sri Lanka. The point at issue really revolves around the relationship of the LSSP-R, now the RWP, and the LSSP. It was expressly put that the reason that the RWP, in about 1972, came to regret their vote that assisted in bringing down the popular-front government was because they wanted at that time to make a renewed overture to the LSSP.

Now, in a certain sense, the experience of popular frontism was chemically pure in Sri Lanka in a way that it has not been in Chile, Spain or France. Because the popular front in Sri Lanka had a chance to run on and on and on and dissipate itself with its own momentum without being displaced by counterrevolutionary generals or internal or foreign fascists. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party is, at least for the present, discredited, but the Communist Party is badly damaged, and the LSSP is a corpse—it is dead! Its trade-union base is disintegrated, it has lost its youth, its women, the Tamils hate it as a chauvinist party of a master nation. And the LSSP-R, now the RWP, tied themselves to the LSSP—which is a corpse—and they are seen as a left-wing split from the LSSP but still within its orbit—part of the old boys of the LSSP—the best of a bad lot. Where have the subjectively revolutionary elements of Sri Lanka gone? I have to report that in Ceylon where the Trotskyists used to be preponderant over the Stalinists, the Stalinists have for the present won. The Mao-influenced youth of the Stalinist parties broke away and were the founding cadres of the JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna—People's Liberation Front]. Now, we know that the JVP are just popular frontists with a gun, very much like the MIRistas in Chile. But they happen to include something like 20,000 of the youth and the young women that are Ceylonese militants, subjectively more or less revolutionary. There are no youth, women or Tamils hanging about the stench of death of the LSSP. The JVP has the reputation in Sri Lanka of intransigent opposition

to the popular front. They have 20,000 members, the RWP has 20 members, and no women or Tamils. This is a question to be pursued in the International Executive.

There is nothing special, inventive or unusually Marxistically creative about the position advanced by the iSt. We're simply trying to apply the developed Bolshevik experience, especially as expressed in the period from February to October 1917, in the modern movement. And not even as late as 1917; basically it goes back to Luxemburg's writings on coalitionism in the Second International at the turn of the century. To be sure, the American Socialist Workers Party likes to point out that coalitionism is not popular frontism, unless the Stalinists are present in the coalition. Around about 1905 you'll find a very partial position by Lenin, when the Bolsheviks were still struggling for a united workers party in Russia. The later, anti-comrade Shachtman was fond of quoting one of these positions: "Oh, where the Bolsheviks are in the majority we will oppose the Cadet Party. Where the Mensheviks are in the majority the Bolsheviks will loyally support the Cadet members of the Duma."³ This, along with the organizational question and others, indicates that the evolution of the Bolshevik faction of revolutionary social democrats into the Bolshevik Party of communists was a process over a decade.

And as my last sentence, let me frighten you with a thought I just had. If, in fact, we did not have this position that we do on opposition to popular fronts and any electoral support to any wing of a popular front, I think that we would belong in the left wing of the Mandelite USec majority [of their 2 1/2 International]. But we're serious people and intend to carry out the logic of *our* position.

Summary by Norden:

The comrades of the RWP or more precisely Comrade Samarakkody in his letters to the Spartacist League that we printed in our internal bulletin said that a popular front is a two-class government. There are no two-class governments. As Trotsky said, "A horseman is not a bloc between a horse and a man." One class commands, and in the popular front that's the bourgeoisie. Secondly, for those

³In 1957 Shachtman was preparing to liquidate his Independent Socialist League into the American social democracy. To rationalize joining a party that supported the Democrats he pointed out that in 1906 Lenin favored maintaining unity with the Mensheviks, even though the Mensheviks wanted to bloc with the bourgeois Cadets in the elections to the Second State Duma. In the article quoted by Shachtman, "Party Discipline and the Fight Against the Pro-Cadet Social-Democrats" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 11), Lenin stated that "The sanction of blocs with the Cadets is the finishing touch that definitely marks the Mensheviks as the opportunist wing of the workers' party." Lenin called for "the widest and most relentless ideological struggle" against "these shameful tactics of blocs with the Cadets." However, added Lenin, if the Menshevik position should become the party line, "all of us, as members of the Party, must act as one man. A Bolshevik in Odessa must cast into the ballot box a ballot paper bearing a Cadet's name even if it sickens him. And a Menshevik in Moscow must cast into the ballot box a ballot paper bearing only the names of Social-Democrats, even if his soul is yearning for the Cadets."

who are sincere opponents of popular frontism, electoral support to the workers parties of popular fronts is not a tactic. It is tailism masquerading as a tactic.

Trotsky had a nice phrase about tactics. He said, "It's not enough to possess the sword. One must give it an edge. It's not enough to give the sword an edge. One must know how to wield it" ["On the United Front"]. The tactic must exploit the contradiction. So the centrists say to the workers parties of the popular front: "Break with the bourgeoisie! Break with the harbingers of fascism and imperialist war! If you do, we will support you—and if you don't we'll support you anyway!" That's not a tactic! We're for tactics.

A comrade mentioned that in the 1936 French parliamentary elections [one of the two French groups which claimed allegiance to the movement for the Fourth International] maintained a Trotskyist candidate in a district where the CP or SP candidate stepped down in favor of a Radical. That's a conceivable tactic. But that does not necessarily imply critical support to the workers parties of the popular front. In fact, in 1935 the position of the French Trotskyists was precisely that. They called for running candidates in those circumstances, and they did not give critical support to any of the parties of the popular front. It was in the '35 municipal elections.⁴

We look for ways of presenting our opposition to popular frontism in a way that could give it a tactical leverage. So that in a Canadian election at some time or other, we first formulated the tactic of conditional opposition.⁵ We were so energetic about it that we went

looking for some NDP legislator up in Thunder Bay, Canada, to see if he was ready to vote against the coalition.

Our tactics must express our strategy. Our strategy is opposition to popular frontism. One comrade asked a good rhetorical question: "What do you do when there's only *one* candidate of the popular front? You can't even distinguish between the workers candidates of the popular front and the bourgeois candidates, because they're *one*."⁶ Also, in parliament you can't vote for the motion of the workers parties of the popular front because there's only one motion: the motion of the government, and it's the government of the popular front—for or against.

That's the way it is in reality. Because what the masses face in their everyday struggle is a popular front. It's a bourgeois government, not a hydra.

Another common objection to our policy of proletarian opposition to the popular front is the charge of aiding the right. But until you're prepared to overthrow the existing government, *any* kind of opposition to a popular front in office will be open to the attack that it is aiding the right. Think of the May Days in Barcelona.

Now I want to say something about a little historical research I've been doing, and that is the question of the popular front in the 1930s. The French GBL (Groupe Bolchevick-Léniniste) had the position of supporting the social democrats or Stalinists in those districts where it didn't run its own candidates in the 1936 elections. To some extent that was taken as a precedent later, after World War II. It's not the only precedent in the history of the Trotskyist movement by a long shot. In 1942 the Chilean POR (Partido Obrero Revolucionario) ran a candidate for president against the popular front. And in 1948 the Italian Trotskyists opposed any vote to the popular front, but they were criticized by Pablo.

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⁴The second half of their "electoral" policy was for a workers mobilization on voting day to disperse a scheduled reactionary demonstration (*La Vérité*, 10 May 1935).

⁵In 1974, when the social-democratic New Democratic Party was running in a corridor coalition with the Liberals, we wrote: "The Spartacist League urges a policy of conditional opposition to the NDP in the current elections until such time as the NDP repudiates its past practice of entering into a tacit coalition with the Liberals.... Militants in the Canadian trade unions must take up the fight to pass motions in their locals demanding that the NDP repudiate its past practice of coalitionism as a condition for labor support in the elections. Only those NDP candidates who repudiate and promise to vote against the NDP-Liberal 'corridor coalition' should be given labor support in the current election. While the NDP remains dependent upon the unions for both electoral and financial support, its practice of coalitionism undercuts the very principle of independent working-class political action" (see "NDP Must Break With Liberals," *Workers Vanguard* No. 47, 21 June 1974).

⁶That was the situation in the February 1936 elections in Spain where the Popular Front presented a single slate, and also when Allende ran for Chilean president in 1970 and Mitterrand for French president in 1974. The response of the partisans of voting for the workers parties of the popular front is to invent phony distinctions. In the 1974 French vote, the OCI (Organisation Communiste Internationaliste de Pierre Lambert) called for a vote not to Mitterrand, candidate of the Union of the Left, but to Mitterrand, first secretary of the Socialist Party, a workers organization. However, the SP had removed him as first secretary precisely in order to make this long-time former bourgeois politician more acceptable as candidate of the popular front.



• Sri Lanka coalition brought racism, repression, austerity. LSSP old guard (left to right): Leslie Goonewardena, N.M. Perera, Colvin R. De Silva

So what was the situation in 1936? First of all, nobody paid any attention to this question at all. In the internal bulletin of the French GBL there is one sentence on its policy in the election—and two pages of discussion in a later bulletin—compared to more than a hundred pages on the split with the Molinier group. Nor was the GBL policy mentioned in any of the post-June 1936 issues of *Lutte Ouvrière*. It was not a big issue. I'm not even sure Trotsky knew what the GBL policy was; he might have, but it's not clear. I was looking through the [Trotsky] archives [at Harvard University], and Trotsky writes big notes over everything putting triple exclamation points everytime Vereecken opens his mouth. But here there's no marks at all on his copy [of the GBL internal bulletin referring to electoral policy].

Now, why is that? The reason is that the real policy of the French Trotskyists—and the essential policy of Trotsky at that time—was, "Not the Popular Front But Committees of Action!" Here's what the Central Committee said to somebody who wanted to vote for all of the popular front candidates: "You have to understand the totality of our position. We must explain to the proletarians that their fate will not be played out on the parliamentary terrain. We call on them to struggle for the revolution on another terrain. And that's why the electoral questions have an absolutely secondary aspect" [GBL, *Bulletin Intérieur* No. 14, 24 April 1936]. Trotsky thought there was going to be a revolution—"The French Revolution Has Begun," remember? And his policy was "Soviets Everywhere"—that was what the first issue of their paper said in June 1936. And that's what the French Trotskyists did—they came out, and their main policy was "No to Electoral Cretinism"; you can't smash the fascists in parliament, you have to have workers militias. And they went out and formed workers militias. That's what their real policy was.

Secondly, I think there's an explanation for why they had what we consider a wrong policy, that is, calling for votes for the workers parties of the popular front. In France all three factions of the French party were soft on the Socialist Party—which they had been in and didn't want to leave [and that influenced their policy toward the popular front]. Immediately after the popular front was formed in May of 1935 Trotsky sent a letter to the International Secretariat arguing that after the Stalin-Laval pact the Bolshevik-Leninists could no longer remain in the SFIO and had to prepare for independent existence ["A New Turn Is Necessary," in *Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1934-35)]. Molinier said it would be a crime to leave the Socialist Party. But all three factions in the French party were begging to be let back into the Socialist Party after they were expelled. It took them six months to even pass a resolution for an aggressive policy toward the Socialist Party.⁸ So that is the context, it's not just Molinier who had a soft position on the popular front—but all the factions of the French party did.

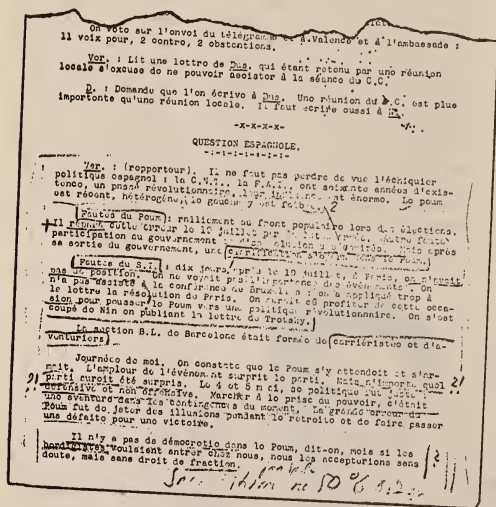
I want to emphasize what this leads to. It's Spain. One of the things that struck me in my research was how everything in the French, Belgian and American Trotskyist papers throughout 1936-37 is about Spain. There's almost nothing about France in the French papers after June 1936. And every faction in the French party, plus Vereecken and Sneeveliet, thought that Trotsky had a sectarian policy on Spain and that the International Secretariat had a criminally sectarian policy on Spain, because the I.S. called for an independent Bolshevik Party there and said that Nin's policy of support to the popular front was a crime. Just about everyone else in Europe, except for the International Secretariat, thought that Trotsky was wrong. (Incidentally, Shachtman played a leading role in the International Secretariat during that period.) Trotsky had to call not only the Molinier group, but also his own supporters to order for publishing articles praising the POUM.⁹ Vereecken said that the people who supported Trotsky's position in Spain were a "gang of adventurers and careerists."

There's a logic to all of this: because their policy was one of critical support to the workers parties of the popular front, because they were soft on the popular front, they said, well, the POUM joined the popular front, unfortunately that was a mistake, but, you know, a mistake is not a crime. And it led to the following situation: In Spain in 1937 there were two Trotskyist groups—one that supported Trotsky and the International Secretariat, and another led by a Comrade Fosco that supported Molinier and Vereecken. During the May Days of 1937 the I.S. group published the famous leaflet that said "For a revolutionary government, take the power." The Molinierist group didn't publish a leaflet because they didn't want to counterpose

⁸For example, the 2 November 1934 *La Vérité* had a front-page headline, "Popular Front? Yes, But for Struggle." Or again, following the municipal elections, "The Popular Front Must Act" (*La Vérité*, 31 May 1935).

⁹See Erwin Wolf's "The Mass Paper" (a pamphlet written under the name Nicole Braun, translated in Leon Trotsky, *The Crisis of the French Section* [1935-36]).

¹⁰E.g., *Lutte Ouvrière* of 15 August 1936 wrote that "Only the POUM of all the traditional parties is putting forward slogans commensurate with the situation and with a class content."



Internal bulletin of the GBL: underlining and annotations in Trotsky's hand



Spain, 1936: POUM welcomes President Azana.

"If the POUM had not marched at the heels of the anarchists and had not fraternized with the 'People's Front,' if it had conducted an intransigent revolutionary policy, then... it would naturally have found itself borne to the head of the masses and would have assured the victory" (Trotsky). *La Voz Leninista*, press of Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists, counterposes "revolutionary front of the proletariat" to the Popular Front.

themselves to the POUM and the Popular Front. For they knew from talking to the POUM leaders that the POUM was going to call on the workers to withdraw because their insurrection threatened the popular-front government.¹⁰ They gave "critical support" to the workers party of the popular front by *strikebreaking on a potential revolution*. That's ultimately what it comes down to. So we've already had this experience. It's not just the POUM—the open popular frontists who betray—but also centrists who try to reduce principled questions to mere tactics that can be led to support the worst betrayal.

Summary by Robertson:

There's a problem in viewing the position of the iSt on popular fronts as Oehlerite; that is, when one tries to be a rightist, one is thought, at least vulgarly, to be smarter than a leftist. Now there's a difficulty in taking the Second International as an abstraction. The Second International produced from 1917 to 1919 a rather credible Communist International. Presumably one should have something to do with that before and during that time. But the Second International in the period of the 1920s was moribund, rightist and largely [openly] in the arms of the bourgeoisie. However, the Depression and the rise of fascism and the rightward turn of the Communist International precipitated a new leftist development in the Second International parties in the early 1930s. It is wrong to have an invariant tactic toward the Socialist Party through these three periods as some comrades would do. Not only is that indifferent to the question of revolutionary opportunity versus betrayal, it's not even intelligent.

Now, regarding the question of the JVP, the issue is one of how the JVP is seen, not what it is. The JVP is seen on that island as a militant, if insurrectionary opposition that means business. We compared it with the Chilean MIR which is, of course, no flattery to the JVP—they merely prepare a new version of a popular front. But on the evidence available to us, the LSSP-R—now the RWP—is only viewed as the far left—with a principled backbone—of the old LSSP. And the fact is that Trotskyism in Ceylon, which used to be predominant among the workers—is now bypassed by a factor of a thousandfold.

Comrade Norden did all this fine research on a very confused situation in the French section in the mid-30s. Faced with these complexities, I took a different route. The American Trotskyist organization was unsplit, a principal mouthpiece of Trotsky, and it operated under purely parliamentary conditions in that period. So I chose to use the American Trotskyists as the model for what Trotsky and the Fourth International meant [generally] in that time.

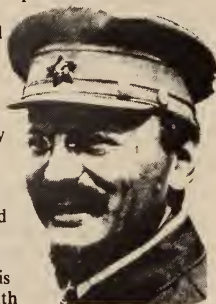
Popular frontism existed in the United States in the late 1930s in the form of the Roosevelt candidacy for president and the LaGuardia candidacy for mayor of New York. In 1936 the labor bureaucrats, social democrats, Stalinists and bourgeois democrats invented a new workers party, the American Labor Party. It was created to bring a few hundred thousand crucial votes in New York State into the Democratic camp. Toward this experiment, and toward every candidacy of the post-split SP and the CP, the Trotskyists had an implacable and central opposition in the name of opposition to the popular front and to every single party that supported the popular front. So much so that until that time the Trotskyists in the United States had largely ignored electoral politics. But faced with the popular-front issue, the SWP was pushed to running its own candidacies for the first time in order to underline its electoral opposition to popular frontism. And they were Trotsky's mouthpiece. ■

¹⁰See Frank Mintz and Miguel Peciña, *Los Amigos de Durruti, los trotskistas y los sucesos de mayo* (Madrid, 1978).

Popular Front

Not a Tactic But "The Greatest Crime"

"The question of questions at present is the People's Front. The left centrists seek to present this question as a tactical or even as a technical maneuver, so as to be able to peddle their wares in the shadow of the People's Front. In reality, the People's Front is the *main question of proletarian class strategy* for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism. For it is often forgotten that the greatest historical example of the People's Front is the February 1917 revolution. From February to October, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who represent a very good parallel to the 'Communists' and Social Democrats, were in the closest alliance and in a permanent coalition with the bourgeois party of the Cadets, together with whom they formed a series of coalition governments. Under the sign of this People's Front stood the whole mass of the people, including the workers', peasants', and soldiers' councils. To be sure, the Bolsheviks participated in the councils. But they did not make the slightest concession to the People's Front. Their demand was to *break* this People's Front, to destroy the alliance with the Cadets, and to create a genuine workers' and peasants' government.



"All the People's Fronts in Europe are only a pale copy and often a caricature of the Russian People's Front of 1917, which could after all lay claim to a much greater justification for its existence, for it was still a question of the struggle against czarism and the remnants of feudalism." [emphasis in original]

—Leon Trotsky, "The Dutch Section and the International" (15-16 July 1936), in *Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1935-36)

"For the proletariat, through its parties, to give up its own independent program means to give up its independent functioning as a class. And this is precisely the meaning of the People's Front. In the People's Front the proletariat renounces its *class independence*, gives up its *class aims*—the *only aims*, as Marxism teaches, which can serve its interests.... The People's Front is thus thoroughly and irrevocably non-proletarian, anti-proletarian.

"By its very nature, the People's Front must be so. The establishment of the People's Front, by definition, requires agreement on a common program between the working-class and non-working-class parties. But the non-proletarian parties cannot agree to the proletarian program—the program of revolutionary socialism—without ceasing to be what they are....

"The People's Front, understood in its fundamentals, is the major form of the preparation among the masses for the achievement of national unity within the democratic nations in support of the coming war. Under the slogans of the People's Front, the masses will march forth to fight for 'their own' imperialism....

"Thus, the People's Front is the contemporary version of social-patriotism, the new form in which the betrayal of 1914 is to be repeated." [emphasis in original]

—James Burnham, *The People's Front: The New Betrayal* (1937)

"26. Reformist-Dissidents [the followers of Jean Longuet] are the agency of the 'Left Bloc' within the working class. Their success will be the greater, all the less the working class as a whole is seized by the idea and practice of the united front against the bourgeoisie. Layers of workers, disoriented by the war and by the tardiness of the revolution, may venture to support the 'Left Bloc' as a lesser evil, in the belief that they do not thereby risk anything at all, or because they see no other road at present.

"27. One of the most reliable methods of counteracting inside the working class the moods and ideas of the 'Left Bloc,' i.e., a bloc between the workers and a certain section of the bourgeoisie against another section of the bourgeoisie, is through promoting persistently and resolutely the idea of a *bloc between all the sections of the working class against the whole bourgeoisie*...."

"31. The indicated method could be similarly employed and not without success in relation to parliamentary and municipal activities. We say to the masses, 'The Dissidents, because they do not want the revolution, have split the mass of the workers. It would be insanity to count on their helping the proletarian revolution. But we are ready, inside and outside the parliament, to enter into certain practical agreements with them, provided they agree, in those cases where one must choose between the known interests of the bourgeoisie and the definite demands of the proletariat, to support the latter in action. The Dissidents can be capable

of such actions only if they renounce their ties with the parties of the bourgeoisie, that is, the 'Left Bloc' and its bourgeois discipline.'

"If the Dissidents were capable of accepting these conditions, then their worker-followers would be quickly absorbed by the Communist Party. Just because of this, the Dissidents will not agree to these conditions. In other words, to the clearly and precisely posed question whether they choose a bloc with the bourgeoisie or a bloc with the proletariat—in the concrete and specific conditions of mass struggle—they will be compelled to reply that they prefer a bloc with the bourgeoisie. Such an answer will not pass with impunity among the proletarian reserves on whom they are counting." [emphasis in original]

—Leon Trotsky, "On the United Front" (2 March 1922), in *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 2

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"The job of the cartel [the "cartel de la gauche," or "Left Bloc," in France] always consisted in putting a brake upon the mass movement, directing it into the channels of class collaboration. This is precisely the job of the People's Front as well. The difference between them—and not an unimportant one—is that the traditional cartel was applied during the comparatively peaceful and stable epochs of the parliamentary regime. Now, however, when the masses are impatient and explosive, a more imposing brake is needed, with the participation of the 'Communists'....

"The coming parliamentary elections, no matter what their outcome, will not in themselves bring any serious changes into the situation: the voters, in the final analysis, are confronted with the choice between an arbiter of the type of Laval and an arbiter of the type of Herriot-Daladier. But inasmuch as Herriot has peacefully collaborated with Laval, and Daladier has supported them both, the difference between them is entirely insignificant, if measured by the scale of the tasks set by history." [emphasis in original]

—Leon Trotsky, "France at the Turning Point" (28 March 1936), in *Leon Trotsky on France*

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"The July days [in Spain] deepen and supplement the lessons of the June days in France with exceptional force. For the second time in five years the coalition of the labor parties with the Radical bourgeoisie has brought the revolution to the edge of the abyss. Incapable of solving a single one of the tasks posed by the revolution—since all these tasks boil down to one, namely, the crushing of the bourgeoisie—the People's Front renders the existence of the bourgeois regime impossible and thereby provokes the fascist coup d'état. By lulling the workers and peasants with parliamentary illusions, by paralyzing their will to struggle, the People's Front creates favorable conditions for the victory of fascism. The policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be paid for by the proletariat with years

of new torments and sacrifice, if not by decades of fascist terror."

—Leon Trotsky, "The New Revolutionary Upsurge and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (July 1936), in *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1935-1936)*

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"What was inexcusably criminal on the part of the [Spanish] Socialist party, the Communist party and the Maurin-Nin party of 'Marxist Unification' was not only that they wrote a 'common program' with the discredited bourgeois parties—which was bad enough—and that thereby, politically speaking, they appeared before the masses in *one party* with the bourgeoisie, but that this 'common program' was dictated and written by the bourgeoisie, and that in every other respect the joint party—under the pseudonym of the 'People's Front'—was dominated by the bourgeoisie." [emphasis in original]

—Max Shachtman, "The Spanish Elections and the People's Front," *New Militant*, 14 March 1936

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"In France the Popular Front took shape as the union on a reformist program of the working-class parties with the great 'middle-class' Radical-Socialist Party. There were no such parties in the United States, but the same social forces nevertheless operated under similar conditions, and the United States equivalent of the Popular Front was simply the New Deal Roosevelt Democratic Party."

—Editor's Comments, "New International," December 1938

* * * * *

"It is the specific question of LaFollette and LaGuardia. The movements backing them are not dreams, but the genuine, homespun authentic American type of 'Farmer-Labor' and 'Labor' Party. And what sort of movements are they? About this no elaborate argument is needed. Are they 'anti-capitalist'? Not one of their leaders would dream of pretending so. They are dedicated heart and soul to the preservation of capitalism.... Are they 'free of all entanglements with capitalist parties'...? How absurd: their chief task in 1936 was to gather votes for Roosevelt. Do they run genuine representatives of the proletariat for office? LaFollette and LaGuardia are the answer.

"The Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation and the American Labor Party are both vicious muddles of class collaboration, Popular Frontism, outworn Populism and atavistic liberalism, the docile instruments of labor bureaucrats and careerist 'progressive' capitalist politicians.

"Support of these movements at the present time in actuality represents the perspective of the liquidation of independent working-class politics. That is the long and short of it."

—"A Manifesto to the Members of the Socialist Party," *Socialist Appeal*, 14 August 1937 ■

Document of the First Delegated Conference of the iSt

The following are excerpts from the main document adopted by the first delegated conference of the international Spartacist tendency. The more narrow organizational material has been deleted.

* * * * *

The "Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency" (DOITT) adopted in the summer of 1974 codified the modest but significant geographical expansion of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt). Declaring that the Spartacist League of the United States (SL/U.S.) and the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand were the nucleus for the crystallization of an international Trotskyist tendency, the document noted: "In a half dozen other countries parties, groups and committees have expressed their general or specific sympathy or support for the international Spartacist tendency, as have scattered supporters or sympathizers from a number of additional countries." Continued development of the iSt has only confirmed the assertion in DOITT that "The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long and above all uneven." The iSt has yet to transcend the framework characterized in DOITT as "a tendency in the process of consolidation." Nevertheless, significant growth in Europe, the development of a leading international cadre incommensurate with the present federated International Executive Committee (IEC) and the prospect of unification with the Revolutionary Workers Party of Sri Lanka (RWP) place on the agenda the first delegated international conference of the iSt and the election of an authoritative IEC as a necessary step toward the goal of forging the International Trotskyist League.

Against American-Centeredness

The iSt has been programmatically internationalist from its inception. The organizational predecessor of the SL/U.S., the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), took as one of its founding documents "World Prospect for Socialism." The RT thereby linked itself with Gerry Healy's Socialist Labour League and the International Committee (IC), the international opposition to the SWP's capitulation to Pabloite revisionism. Healy's criminal bureaucratism in splitting the RT in 1962 and in the expulsion of Spartacist from the London conference in 1966 badly set back the struggle against Pabloite revisionism within the ostensible world Trotskyist movement as well as in the U.S., and imposed upon the Spartacist League, founded in 1966, a prolonged period of involuntary national isolation. DOITT (published in *Spartacist* No. 23, Spring 1977) codified the extent to which this national isolation had been breached by 1974, but it also indicated the degree to which the international extension of the iSt was tenuous and reversible.

Given the small growth of the SL/U.S. relative to the growth of the iSt elsewhere especially in Europe since DOITT was adopted, the deforming preponderant weight of the SL/U.S. in the iSt has been reduced but by no means redressed. A majority of the IEC as well as the entirety of the Interim Secretariat (I.S.) are SL/U.S. members, in large measure the result of the 15-year history of the SL/U.S. and the relative immaturity of the other sections. However, given this, the political backwardness of the American working class combined with its present relative quiescence, broken recently only by the mine workers strike of 1978, imposes potentially damaging pressures on the iSt. These pressures are compounded by the fact that the iSt's slender links to the organized proletariat are concentrated entirely within North America where they are indeed modest and not immune to attrition and disorientation engendered by the dormant class struggle.

It is particularly important, given the backwardness of the American working class, that the sections of the iSt do not perceive the extremely modest trade-union work of the tendency in North America as normative, although this work contains a major (but not the sole) reservoir of experience in the labor movement for the iSt.

There is a similar tendency to see the SL/U.S. as the organizational norm by smaller sections whose tasks are more modest. While in broad outline the organizational practices of the U.S. section are the *application to an organization with its size and tasks* of the evolved practices and norms of the Leninist and Trotskyist movement, other sections of the iSt must make the corresponding adjustments in terms of scale and concrete tasks....

It has been mentioned that having neither the direct authority of triumphant proletarian revolution nor that of a world-historic figure like Trotsky, the iSt has sought to maintain programmatic and organizational coherence in part by dependence on modern technology (jet planes, overseas telephones and the xerox machine). This is particularly the case given the relative political inexperience of most of the cadre of the iSt. Often it has required a struggle with various sections to enter the latter half of the 20th century (e.g., obtaining sufficient telephone capacity). It is highly probable that the present composition of the iSt would not exist as a cohesive international tendency if it were operating on the resources of the Trotskyist movement of the 1930s.

...The heavy dependence of the iSt on money, particularly on SL/U.S. financial resources, poses the following contradiction...the U.S. is entering a recession which must necessarily damage that financial base and threatens a significant contraction of international work. At the same time, the possibility of substantial recruitment to the SL/U.S. in the next

period has been posed. Realizing this potential will also require cadre and financial resources. But in the SL/U.S., as in the other sections, recruitment is one road to maintaining and expanding our financial base.

Indicative of the uneven development of the iSt since the adoption of DOITT is that our most significant organizational extension, the founding of the Spartacist League of Britain (SL/B) as our second-largest section, accentuates the overwhelming disproportion in the tendency of the English-speaking sections. It is exemplary of this disproportion that, of the stable and regular newspapers produced by sections of the international tendency, all four are English-language. The French and German presses remain unstable, infrequent and irregular....

Special Preference for the Non-Anglo-American Sections

The iSt remains committed to overcoming this disproportion, which is one that characterized the split in the 1950s between the IC (centered on English-speaking sections) and the International Secretariat. One of the motivations for cutting back *Workers Vanguard* to a bi-weekly was to free cadres to assist the work of the iSt outside North America....

The Anglo-American-centeredness of the iSt was further accentuated by the personally tragic but almost inevitable demise of the Chilean Organización Trotskista Revolucionaria (OTR) under the pressures of exile and a lack of cadre resources for the tasks of a tiny propaganda group. As a consequence, perspectives for work both in Latin America and Spain have been set back.... With regard to the Far East, we have hardly begun to penetrate the exotic character of Japanese ostensible Trotskyism. Through our fusion with the Trotskyist Faction (TF) of the Workers Socialist League in Britain and the foundation of the SL/B, the iSt has acquired an important circle of Near Eastern supporters. Further, in the aftermath of the powerful

confirmation of our line in Iran, we have contacted in several countries Iranian exile individuals and groups who are repelled by the disgusting capitulation of every other left tendency to Shi'ite clerical reaction.

The most important and also most difficult opportunity for the extension of the iSt is the proposed unification with the RWP of Sri Lanka. Except for exile groups like the OTR or isolated individuals,... unification with the RWP presents our tendency with its first opportunity to crystalize a section in the colonial world. This unity would incorporate into our tendency the invaluable, decades-long experience of Comrade Edmund Samarakkody as a Trotskyist leader in South Asia and his struggle to extract from the notorious opportunism of ostensible Trotskyism in Sri Lanka an authentic revolutionary Marxist movement. At the same time, given the magnitude of the outstanding political differences, the enormous geographical distances and the divergences in culture and living standards, unification with the RWP is the most difficult extension the iSt has ever sought to undertake.

Sectional Leadership Problems

All of the sections outside of the U.S. face, to one degree or another, the problems of cohering a stable leadership collective. Such developments seldom take place by linear progression. A study of the history of how such a leadership was cohered in the SL/U.S. reveals the importance of faction fights, anti-clique fights and the necessary political struggles which accompany adapting tasks to changing conditions. The demise of the civil rights movement combined with the opening of opportunities in SDS and the Ellens/Turner faction fight, the "Transformation Memorandum" and the anti-clique fights with Cunningham/Moore/Benjamin/Treiger are key examples. It was these fights and over a decade of common work that gave the SL/U.S. cadre its cohesion. Other sections should not

continued on next page

Invasion of Vietnam by China, in collusion with U.S. Imperialism, sharply posed the issue of Soviet defenseism. Right: Spartacist contingent in New York demonstration, 24 February 1979.



necessarily expect the cohesion of their leaderships to come less painfully or more rapidly.

Outside of the U.S. all of the sections are led by comrades (most of whom as individuals have more than a decade in the Marxist movement) who constitute a completely new or partially tested collective leadership.... In Britain the Trotskyist Faction was qualitatively co-equal in size with the preexisting station and composed of comrades whose political experiences were shaped by the British far left.... The task of crystalizing a cohered British leadership remains on the agenda.

The leadership of the German TLD [Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands] has been broadened organically as the recruitment by ones and twos of leading cadres from opponent organizations has repeatedly posed the necessity of their integration into the leadership....

Recently the West Coast CC [Central Committee] group expressed concern that the SL/U.S. was losing its communist cutting edge. The past prolonged period of social quiescence fostering routinism and complacency has markedly affected the SL/U.S.—from the Central Office administration to the *Workers Vanguard* Editorial Board to the youth organization to the trade-union fractions—with occasional disastrous consequences. Nonetheless, the organization has demonstrated the resilience to break out of the office-bound or parochial outlook when opportunities do arise. The fine and energetic work during the 1978 United Mine Workers strike, the 1978 New York City election campaign, the work around the Iran issue and lately in response to the victimization of a leading trade-union militant reveal this capacity. The youth organization will bear most of the burden in the coming year for pushing and directing the recruitment drive. It should be noted that the section has suffered enormously from the lack of a Trade Union Commission and, less pressing but also important has been the lack of centrally directed black work.

Outside of the SL/U.S. we continue to confront the inherent instability of one- or two-branch sections. One-branch "sections" (TLC [Trotskyist League of Canada], LTF [Ligue Trotskyiste de France] and previously the TLD) are schizoprenic locals which are concentrated in one city but are forced to assume some of the responsibilities of a national section. There is a tendency under these conditions to seek to replicate parallel organizational structures for "national" and "local" work leading to cumbersome and ineffectual organizational arrangements. Where sections have two branches the second branch tends to be weak and in the long term unviable.... Periodic transfer and reorganization of cadre have been compelled....

The young comrades of the Lega Trotskysta d'Italia (LTd'I) have shown an inadequate grasp of the methodology of Leninism on the importance to the working class of the fight to defend democratic rights. This has led to disputes in the past... which must be expected to resurface in new forms. At the same time, their political work, energetically pursued, has been in the direction of fusion with the iSt. The I.S. recommends that this fusion take place at the international conference.

Station Stockholm has functioned persistently as a

valuable literature distribution, contacting and information gathering outpost despite its isolation....

Tasks Facing the iSt

Most of the European recruitment took place during the period of détente when the question of the popular front was of immediate and decisive importance. This recruitment took place on the basis of intransigent opposition to electoral support, no matter how "critical," to workers parties in popular frontist coalitions. This had its correlative in the U.S. where the SL/U.S. made its greatest recruitment during the height of the antiwar movement when opposition to class collaborationist "peace" coalitions, the American embodiment of the popular front for that period, was a principal axis of our political intervention. Since a significant section of the iSt was forged in steadfast opposition to popular frontism, the proposed unification with the RWP can be faced with greater confidence, though one of our principal differences is over critical electoral support to workers parties in the popular front.

An acid test for cadre development and the development of the sections is their response to a period of renewed imperialist anti-Sovietism whose most dramatic expression has been the forging of a U.S.-China alliance and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. The Russian question will necessarily intrude directly into the political life of every section. The Trotskyist position of unconditional defense of the gains of the October Revolution will have the same cutting edge as our opposition to the popular front in West Europe and Chile had in the previous period.

The perspective of our sections in Germany, France and Britain must center on regroupment. To this end the TLD and LTF now face the task of stabilizing a regular, correct, *interventionist* press as a main priority. This is not merely a question of editorial and technical capacity but of political leadership and perspective.... The TLD in particular, but all the smaller sections, must aim to gain a feel for social reality in their country by seeking industrial employment on an individual basis, dealing with current social issues in their press and selling their newspaper at the plant gates. But in the short run, as the negative examples of Canada and Australia have demonstrated, "*trade-union work*" is the enemy of a *regroupment orientation*. The SL/B has gained sufficient forces, by virtue of its successful regroupment, to begin industrial implantation. And in the long run the TLD must transcend its historic resistance to trade-union implantation, a resistance which is rooted in the pre-capitalist caste vestiges in modern German society, and find the road to a modest but real presence in the organized German proletariat. But in this period we will make our gains by aggressive political intervention with our full program. Our presses will be the main tools for qualitative growth.

The failure to develop operational youth perspectives including constituting indigenous campus fractions in Europe has deterred recruitment and the necessary forging of links to the volatile student/youth layer. This work must accompany regional traveling and aggressive

Portugal, 1975—Watershed In OCI's slide to reformism. As Soares' SP was spearheading reactionary mobilization against PCP and proletarian militancy, OCI called for a "SP-PCP government led by Soares."

AP

PORTUGAL
gouvernement militaire
ou gouvernement PS-PCP
présidé par Soares

INFORMATIONS
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opponents work. Only the SL/U.S. and the SL/ANZ have carried out genuine youth work in the last period.

The Need for an Elected IEC

While each of the sectional leaderships outside that of the U.S. is still in the process of being assembled or consolidated, an international leadership has been forged in the past period through joint campaigns and common political struggles. (E.g., the Muñoz campaign, the authoritative international delegations to the 27 April 1978 "Orderly Retreat" PB and the February 1979 TLD emergency conference, the building of the British section which from the establishment of the station... was a truly international undertaking, and the internationally orchestrated propaganda campaigns waged over Iran and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam.) This international leadership has acquired tested working relations and a fund of common experience which make the proposal for an elected IEC both realistic and necessary.

Our tendency is now constrained by the formally semi-federated IEC on which only full Central Committee members of full sections carry decisive votes. This IEC is not commensurate with our evolved international leadership.... Therefore the I.S. proposes that the delegates to the international conference now elect an International Executive Committee.

Workers Vanguard has been the main organ of our tendency internationally. This has had a strongly positive effect in aiding the homogenization of our tendency but has also augmented the U.S.-centricity. The *Spartacist* is intended to be the theoretical and documentary history of our movement. Its continuing infrequency in English, French and German has been one of the major failings of the I.S. Spanish *Spartacist*, even though it is backed up by no Spanish-speaking section and has generated no important contacts, does reach a modest number of cadre of the ostensible Trotskyist movement in Spain, and in Latin American exile concentrations elsewhere.... We could, for example, seek to shift vital forces from the SL/U.S. to

rejuvenate from the center the quadri-lingual *Spartacist* while not qualitatively weakening the SL/U.S. press capacity.

The iSt, Ostensible Trotskyism and the Russian Question

Carter's "human rights" campaign, reviving the rhetoric of the Cold War in order to morally re-arm U.S. imperialism after Vietnam and Watergate, has conditioned a rapid shift to the right on the part of the ostensible Trotskyist movement. The products of the factionally sundered International Committee have undergone qualitative degeneration. The political banditry and organizational gimmickry of the Healyites have taken them out of the workers movement and into the environs of Colonel Qaddafi of Libya. The other major component of the former IC, the French OCI of Pierre Lambert, has kept in step with Carter's anti-Soviet crusade and carried its Stalinophobia to new heights. They have adopted the slogans of the pope regarding national rights in East Europe and the slogans of Konrad Adenauer regarding German unification. The OCI has moved so far to the right that there is now a clear convergence with the reformist SWP except where adaptation on respective national terrain to their own bourgeois causes one to take a position to the right of the other. (E.g., the SWP on "free speech for fascists," the OCI on the popular front or East Europe.) With the degeneration of the decomposition products of the 1971 IC explosion, the claim of the iSt to represent the continuity of the anti-Pabloite struggle of the pre-1967 IC has been strengthened.

The USec, torn by years of bitter factional warfare, achieved a troubled peace on a more right-wing basis during the period of the French Union of the Left. Spurred by the demise of the petty-bourgeois leftism of the Sixties, the impressionistic international majority led by Ernest Mandel dumped its role as publicity agents for Che Guevara and became the brokers for the left wing of the popular front. Virulent anti-Sovietism

continued on next page

embodied in the campaigns for Soviet dissidents became a common platform of the popular front in Europe—the pledge demanded from the Stalinists by the Social Democrats guaranteeing that their allegiance to their own bourgeoisie would exceed their allegiance to the Kremlin. Thus, central to the recent shift of the USec majority was a backtracking on the Russian question which paralleled the earlier social democratization of their main factional opponent, the American SWP, and facilitated the conjunctural convergence.

The USec majority has most recently embraced the anti-Soviet parliamentary cretinism of the Eurocommunists. This continuing political slide has been accompanied by the growth of a sizable right wing including substantial support in the LCR for the pro-OCI tendencies. The OCI has now become essentially reformist. Thus the USec majority's abandonment of even formal obeisance to the Trotskyist position on the Russian question leaves to the iSt alone the heritage of Soviet defensism.

As shown by the dramatic polarization over Portugal and Angola, the contradictions between the centrists and reformists in the USec still have potentially strong centrifugal force despite the present evident political convergence. When the class struggle reaches an acute pre-revolutionary situation, the paper unity between centrists, whose omnivorous appetites pursue any opportunity, and reformists, who go after the *main* chance—conciliation within their own state power (frequently under the fig leaf of the popular front)—will tend to blow apart. The Pabloite *method* of substituting alien class forces for the proletarian, internationalist revolutionary party is of course the same for both wings of the USec. Only the

particular appetite, conditioned by national terrain, is different. The European-based centrists adapt to the Stalinists... who in turn capitulate to their own bourgeoisie. The American SWP, in the absence of a mass reformist party, capitulates *directly* to the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie.

Should either the centrist or reformist forces acquire real weight in a particular national situation, the convenience of "internationalism" will be expendable. Sectoralism can go by the board as some sectors are found to be "more equal than others." The American SWP's shameless reversal of its "gay power" enthusiasm, to grease the wheels for entry into the trade-union bureaucracy, is but an indication of this—and without an immediate real chance to consummate betrayal within the labor movement.

The pressure to revise the characterization of Cuba as a healthy workers state has been an abiding irritant between the two wings of the USec. In sharp contrast to its social-democratic anti-Sovietism the SWP has opted to continue and intensify its adoration of the Cuban Stalinists. The USec majority, no longer interested in tailing petty-bourgeois guerrillanism, would prefer instead to call Cuba a "bureaucratized workers state." The Cuba discussion is indicative of the USec's fundamental disorientation over Stalinism and again exposes the basis of the '63 reunification. Because of the iSt's uniquely incisive position on postwar Stalinism, we should aim our polemics toward this USec weak spot. No serious Marxist can analyse Cuba without reference to iSt material on this subject.

But the dispute over Cuba is presently academic compared to the disgusting spectacle of the entire USec prostrate before the ayatollahs in Iran. The USec has gone so far in its hailing of the mullahs that it has refused, in the U.S. and Australia, to engage in common defense work for its comrades in Khomeini's prisons with those who attack their jailers! The iSt's unique line of "Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!" so obvious from a Marxist or even democratic viewpoint, continues to receive powerful vindication from events which we must exploit to the utmost. In addition, the Iranian struggle has demonstrated the more central role of the woman question in the countries of the East. The programmatic consequences of the slogan "No to the Veil!" must be a part of our regroupment perspectives.

Likewise, over the Chinese invasion of Vietnam, the line of the iSt was not only correct but powerful and popular. It vindicated our tendency's two decades of principled struggle for a Trotskyist analysis of post-World War II Stalinism. For the USec, however, the Chinese invasion of Vietnam prompted a recrudescence of the old factional alignments in an ongoing, long-winded debate where both sides are united by their agreement to avoid the question of Soviet defensism, placed squarely on the agenda by the U.S.-China alliance and U.S. collusion with the Chinese invasion.

The rightward shift within the ostensible Trotskyist movement has meant that small groups with international connections which once existed to the left of the USec—Massari, the "third tendency," the Spartacusbund—have all either made their peace with Pabloism or virtually disintegrated. In Britain there is still a myriad of tiny groups to the left of the IMG who call themselves Trotskyist and continue to offer the SL/B targets for regroupment and linear recruitment.

In Germany our recent focus on discrediting the

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Trotskyist pretensions of the GIM has produced a trickle of young recruits. But the GIM is so wretched that a generation of subjectively revolutionary youth, mistaking the GIM for Trotskyism, have turned instead to Maoism. Given the unabashed counterrevolutionary foreign policy of China, this Maoist milieu has been in a crisis which the TLD must seek to intersect. Regarding France, ... the LTF is at an historic impasse. They confront three ostensible Trotskyist organizations with thousands of supporters. And behind them is the industrial working class dominated by the CP/CGT which have the appearance, even to our own comrades at times, of an unassailable monolith. But ever since 1789 there has been in France a massive social explosion about every generation. The LTF must prepare for the next such explosion by vigorous recruitment efforts and the stabilization of a real newspaper. If it is able to act with correctness and vigor, it should be able to exploit the ensuing regroupment opportunities and perhaps emerge with a few hundred new members and as a significant factor in the French left.

We are no longer in that period, following the USec's "Tenth World Congress" in 1974, when the two major factions of the USec were on opposite sides of the barricades in Portugal. At that time there could have emerged out of the USec a left opposition to both the centrist majority and reformist minority, an opposition which took a principled revolutionary stand against popular frontism. But while that opportunity may have passed, the model programmatic basis for revolutionary regroupment presented at that time retains its validity for those left-moving forces seeking genuine Trotskyism. This basis was outlined in a draft declaration by cadres expelled from, or driven out of the USec who now adhere to or support the iSt:

- No political or electoral support to popular fronts; for conditional opposition to workers parties in open or implicit class-collaborationist coalitions;
- Uphold the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution; for proletarian leadership of the national/social struggle;
- For military support to petty-bourgeois nationalist forces fighting imperialism, but absolutely no political support to such forces; for Trotskyist parties in every country;
- For unconditional defense of all the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialism; for political revolution against the bureaucracies; no political support to competing Stalinist cliques and factions;
- Against violence within the workers movement;
- For communist fractions in the unions, based on the Transitional Program;
- For the communist tactic of the united front from above; for the tactic of regroupment to unite subjective revolutionists in the vanguard party; for intransigent exposure of centrism;
- Rejection of the claims of ostensibly Trotskyist Internationals to speak for the Fourth International, destroyed by Pabloism in 1951-1953;
- For the reorganizing of a democratic-centralist Fourth International which will stop at nothing short of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

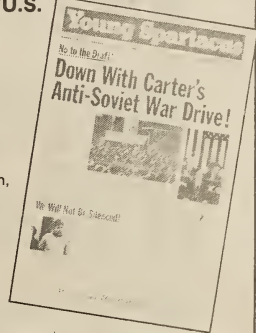
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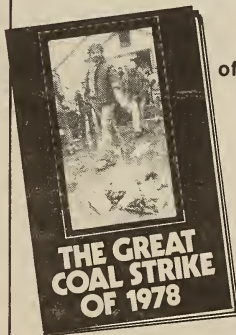
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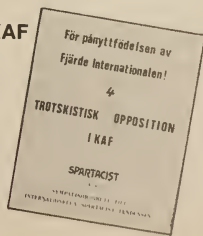
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Toward the International Trotskyist League!

The very first delegated international conference, highest body of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), was held in Britain in late summer. Voting delegates attended from the Spartacist League/U.S., Spartacist League of Australia/New Zealand, Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands, Spartacist League of Britain, Ligue Trotskyiste de France and Trotskyist League of Canada, along with observers from these and other countries.

Also attending were three representatives of the Revolutionary Workers Party of Ceylon (RWP), a small Ceylonese left-centrist current headed by veteran Sinhalese Trotskyist Edmund Samarakkody, and nine members of the Lega Trozkysta d'Italia, a grouping of very youthful Pabloist-derived militants.

The nearly 300 delegates and iSt observers were drawn from the more experienced layers of the tendency. The average age was over 29; political history averaged nearly five years in the iSt and seven and a half years in organized leftist politics, from a wide variety of political backgrounds. There were former members of the pro-Moscow (U.S., France, Austria), pro-Peking (U.S., Canada, Germany) and "Eurocommunist"-type (Australia) Stalinists and of various social-democratic organizations; former "third camp Trotskyists" (Shachtman, Cliff); "anti-revisionist Trotskyists" from the British, American and Israeli Healyites and French and German Lambertists; and ex-members of more eclectic currents: the IWW, Posadas tendency (Italy), MIR (Chile), Black Panthers, women's and "gay" (homosexual) radical groups. But by far the largest number of comrades won from opponent organizations came from the United Secretariat (USec).

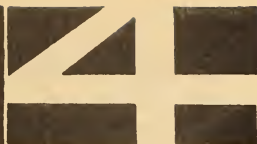
In 1964 our founding cadres were expelled from the

American SWP for our left opposition to the USec's capitulation to Castro, dubbed by the SWP/USec an "unconscious Trotskyist." Our principled political struggle against Pabloist dissolution of the Trotskyist vanguard party into bourgeois-nationalist and Stalinist formations was met with political suppression and trumped-up disciplinary charges not only by the SWP, which was already in hard pursuit of deepening reformist appetite, but also by the centrist USec, which hid behind the toothless Voorhis Act (inhibiting international political affiliation) to refuse to hear our appeal.

We had to defend our principled stance for international democratic centralism not only against the live-and-let-live USec but also against the International Committee of Healy/Lambert, which claimed to represent the continuity of Trotskyism while then functioning according to a variant of the practices of Zinovievist "Cominternism." The IC applied a ruthless "discipline" to its small sections but preserved a mutual hands-off attitude toward its English and French organizations.

Our tendency has been built through principled regroupments. Even when we had no presence outside North America, our founding cadres insisted that the maintenance of a revolutionary program requires the subordination of any national revolutionary organization to an international collective. But that collective cannot be scotch-taped together in the manner of the USec, but must be forged in the struggle for programmatic cohesion. As the USec and its competing ostensibly Trotskyist "internationalists" have proceeded from rotten-bloc alliances to jagged

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Afghanistan and the Left:

The Russian Question Point Blank

Afghanistan is a flash of lightning which illuminates the real contours of the world political landscape. It has exploded the last illusions of détente to reveal the implacable hostility of U.S. imperialism to the Soviet degenerated workers state. It has stripped away all diplomatic cover for Washington's alliance with Maoist/Stalinist China. And it has confronted the left inescapably with "the Russian question": the nature of the state originating in the Bolshevik Revolution and its conflict with world capitalism.

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Hail Red Army!

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Afghanistan and the Left...

(continued from page 1)

For revolutionary socialists there is nothing tricky, nothing ambiguous about the war in Afghanistan. The Soviet army and its left-nationalist allies are fighting an anti-communist, anti-democratic mélange of landlords, money lenders, tribal chiefs and mullahs committed to mass illiteracy. And to say that imperialist support to this social scam is out in the open is the understatement of the year. U.S. "national security" czar Zbigniew Brzezinski actually traveled to the Khyber Pass and rifle in hand incited the insurgents: "That land over there is yours and you will go back one day because your cause is right and God is on your side." The gut-level response of every radical leftist should be fullest solidarity with the Soviet Red Army.

Yet much of the left, with the Maoists leading the pack, has joined the imperialist crusade against "Soviet expansionism." In fact, the official pro-Peking group in the U.S., the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) attacked the Carter Doctrine from the right as too soft on the Russians. Likewise, the "Third Camp" social-democrats, like the British Cliff group, which could maintain a certain left posture in the days of détente, stand once more revealed as State Department socialists. Those leftists, whatever they call themselves, who deny that the Soviet Union is a proletarian state power (albeit bureaucratically degenerated) find themselves, some more, some less willingly, on the same side of the barricades as U.S. imperialism.

It is not surprising that the Maoists and social democrats should rally to imperialist anti-Sovietism, although some may bridle at making common cause with the crazed anti-communist Brzezinski and his Afghan cutthroats. But for Trotskyists, support to the Soviet army in Afghanistan should be an elementary political reflex. Trotsky's last great factional struggle, against the "Third Camp" Shachtman/Burnham opposition in the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1940, was provoked by the imperialist campaign against the Soviet invasion of "little, democratic Finland." Drawing the hardest line against

social-democratic anti-communism, Trotsky declared: "The safeguarding of the socialist revolution comes before formal democratic principles."

And the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has a far more progressive content than Stalin's action in Finland in 1940, where the Kremlin simply wanted a slice of territory for defensive military purposes, moreover, in the context of an alliance with Nazi Germany. A victory for the Islamic-feudalist insurgency in Afghanistan will not only mean a hostile, imperialist-allied state on the USSR's southern border. It will mean the extermination of the Afghan left and the reimposition of feudal barbarism—the veil, the bride price. Moreover, the Soviet military occupation raises the possibility of a social revolution in this wretchedly backward country, a possibility which did *not* exist before.

Yet much of the ostensibly Trotskyist movement is also dancing to Carter's tune over Afghanistan. The most outright counterrevolutionary position is that of the unstable bloc between the Stalinophobic reformists of the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) and the followers of political adventurer Nahuel Moreno. They not only demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops, but actually solidarize with the reactionary Islamic insurgents! (See "Morenoites Call for Counterrevolution in USSR," *Spartacist* No. 27-28, Winter 1979-80.)

The United Secretariat (USec) has, predictably enough, split three ways over the question. A large minority, whose foremost spokesman is Tariq Ali, demands Soviet withdrawal in the name of self-determination for Afghanistan. The leadership around Ernest Mandel too condemns the Soviet intervention for violating national rights, but grudgingly admits that to now call for withdrawal would amount to support to imperialist-backed counterrevolution. The American SWP supports the Soviet action but deliberately minimizes its significance.

SWP Skirts the Russian Question

Long seeking to become a pressure group on the liberal bourgeoisie, the SWP has presented opposition to U.S. imperialist militarism almost exclusively by reference to the democratic right of national self-determination. It was "heroic, little Cuba" and later "heroic, little Vietnam" against the American colossus. Social revolution in the colonial world was reduced to series of contests between various "Third World" Davids and the U.S. Goliath. In this way the SWP echoed and so reinforced the liberal notion of imperialism as big-power bullying of and military intervention into small countries.

But now it is Jimmy Carter who is appealing to liberal "anti-imperialism" and even Third World nationalism over the Soviet invasion of "little, independent Afghanistan." The imperialist media go on about "Russia's Vietnam," evoking sympathy for poor villagers with their primitive weapons battling the mechanized army of a "superpower."

How does the SWP justify its support to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan without confronting liberal, anti-Communist prejudices? No easy task this. The SWP tries the line that Washington is mainly reacting against "the Afghan revolution" rather than the Soviet expansion. That's right. "The Afghan revolution"—this world-historic event which threatens imperialist domination in Asia!

"It was not Moscow's increased influence in Afghanistan that alarmed Washington—though there was some

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March 1980, Washington, D.C.: Spartacist contingent in anti-draft demonstration defends Soviet Union against imperialist war-mongering.

concern over that—but the Afghan revolution itself and its repercussions throughout central Asia. The imperialists were opposed to the social gains that had been won by the Afghan workers and peasants and feared that the revolution would advance toward the overthrow of capitalist property relations."

—"How Washington Instigated Counterrevolution in Afghanistan," *Intercontinental Press*, 14 January 1980

So the SWP can play its old liberal refrain of "self-determination for the Afghan revolution." The Soviet role is here reduced to merely aiding a revolution in a small country attacked by imperialism, a role comparable to that which it played in Cuba and Vietnam:

"So the issue is not Soviet intervention, but a growing U.S. intervention—aimed at taking back the gains won by the Afghan masses—that finally forced the Soviet Union to respond."

—*Militant*, 15 February

Everyone knows that, of course, the issue is Soviet intervention or, more precisely, the incorporation of Afghanistan into the Soviet bloc through social revolution *from without* as in East Europe.

Although the SWP has written numerous articles on "the Afghan revolution," one is hard put to find a *class analysis* of the revolution, the government which issued out of it or the state. Rather, in Stalinist or bourgeois-nationalist fashion, the post-April 1978 government is described as "revolutionary," "popular," "progressive," "anti-imperialist," etc.

The April 1978 "Revolution": What Happened?

Key to understanding what has happened in Afghanistan since April 1978 is that for decades the country has been a Soviet client state. A large fraction of the country's thin

educated stratum was trained in the USSR, and much of the intelligentsia regarded the Soviet Union as a source of social progress. And for good reason. An Afghan schoolteacher looking across the northern border at Soviet Central Asia, two generations ago as wretchedly backward as Afghanistan, today sees a literate, relatively modern society where women are no longer degraded slaves.

The generally pro-Soviet sympathies of the Afghan intelligentsia manifested themselves organizationally with the establishment of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1965. A pro-Moscow, petty-bourgeois radical party, the PDPA was composed of schoolteachers, university students, government officials and, not least important, army officers. The party had no base among the peasant masses nor among the tiny urban working class.

In 1967 the PDPA split between the *Khalq* (Masses) faction led by Noor Mohammad Taraki, one of the country's best-known poets, and the *Parcham* (Banner) faction led by Babrak Karmal. The difference between the factions is hard to fathom, and may have been cliquish in nature. Both groups adhered to a strategy, consistent with their social composition, of capturing and radicalizing the weak governing apparatus. Officers loyal to the PDPA-*Parcham* played a major role in overthrowing the monarchy in 1973, and the party participated in the first bourgeois-nationalist Daud government.

Subsequently Daud moved right and in early 1978 decided to crush the PDPA, now shakily reunited. When police assassinated a PDPA leader and others were arrested, mass demonstrations, mainly composed of

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Left-nationalist PDPA regime distributes land to poor peasants (right). This spurred reactionary uprising of landlords, moneylenders and mullahs.



students and government office workers, broke out in Kabul. In the ensuing showdown the PDPA military fraction outgunned Daud's men; Daud himself was killed. Thus was born the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

The April 1978 "Revolution" was essentially a left-wing military coup with a certain popular support among the intellectuals. Unusually, the PDPA officers turned the main governmental posts over to the civilian wing of the party. But the real power remained in the military. Hafizullah Amin emerged as the strongman of the new regime because he had previously been in charge of the PDPA's work within the officer corps.

Glorifying "the Afghan revolution" so as to minimize the significance of the Soviet intervention, the SWP conjures up a non-existent mass workers' and peasants' insurrection:

"Then, in April 1978, the Afghan masses rose up and fought to change these oppressive conditions...."

"Tens of thousands of Afghan workers and peasants took to the streets, a section of the army rebelled, a new government came to power."

—*Militant*, 18 January 1980

The narrow, petty-bourgeois elite social base of the new PDPA regime is described in late 1978 by the knowledgeable radical journalist Fred Halliday. Although a supporter of "the Afghan revolution," Halliday, unlike the SWP charlatans, respects empirical truth:

"What has occurred is the seizure of power by a radical sector within the state apparatus, led by civilians (most of them teachers or other kinds of civil servant) aided by army officers...."

"The new regime's implantation outside the main urban centers is very weak, and the inevitable temptation will be to rely on the armed forces rather than the party to implement policies...."

"At the same time, the lower ranks of the State apparatus—both civilian and military—remained untouched, and in particular it was evident that the possibility of counterrevolutionary resistance from the lower ranks of the armed forces had not been eliminated merely by the removal of the top officers."

—"Revolution in Afghanistan," *New Left Review*, November-December 1978

The left-nationalist PDPA came to power in one of the

most primitive, tradition-bound countries on earth. According to the United Nations *Statistical Yearbook* for 1978, only 35,000 people were employed in manufacturing out of a population of 17 to 20 million. At the same time, there were a quarter of a million mullahs, paid by the government, an enormous parasitic caste sucking the blood from a desperately poor people.

These few statistics indicate the *limits* to social change from *within* Afghan society. Unlike in neighboring Iran or Pakistan, a proletarian revolution is *not* possible in Afghanistan. The country is too absolutely economically backward. On the other hand, the social base for reactionary resistance to even the most moderate bourgeois-democratic reforms is strong.

Despite this the PDPA regime launched an ambitious (for Afghanistan) series of democratic reforms—land redistribution, cancellation of peasant debts, reduction of the bride price to a nominal sum, compulsory education for both sexes, moves toward the separation of church and state. In particular it was the regime's steps toward the equality of women which most fueled the reactionary uprising. And this is recognized even by bourgeois journalists who have covered the Afghan "freedom fighters." The *New York Times* (9 February) reporter observed:

"Land reform attempts undermined their village chiefs. Portraits of Lenin threatened the religious leaders. But it was the Kabul revolutionary Government's granting of new rights to women that pushed Orthodox Moslem men in the Pashtoon villages of eastern Afghanistan into picking up their guns."

The Left-Nationalist Regime Besieged

By all accounts the PDPA regime acted with a bureaucratic commandism and arbitrariness which alienated many of its potential supporters, especially among the rural poor. The example commonly given is the cancellation of peasant debts to the landlords. The landlords retaliated by withholding seed grain and, since the

continued on page 21

Counterrevolution in Afghanistan: The Khomeini Connection

Much of the left, notably the Maoists, has taken a consistent counterrevolutionary line in tailing Khomeini's clericalist dictatorship in Iran and opposing the Soviet intervention against the feudalist insurgency in Afghanistan. The fake-Trotskyist American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), however, has chosen to support Islamic reaction in Iran while opposing it in Afghanistan. It has become common in SWP literature to couple the "Iranian and Afghan revolutions," hoping no one will notice that the Iranian "revolution" led by the mullahs is belligerently hostile to the Afghan "revolution" and the Soviet Red Army.

The SWP blithely claims that what is happening in Afghanistan "is not a war of Muslims against atheists" (Doug Jenness, *The Truth About Afghanistan*, March 1980). This unusual—one might even say unique—view is contested by an eminent authority whom the SWP deeply respects. Back in June 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini himself summoned the Soviet ambassador and declared: "Afghanistan is an Islamic country and their problems should be solved in an Islamic way" (*New York Times*, 13 June 1979).

A Radio Teheran broadcast last September was explicit in anti-Soviet Islamic bellicosity:

"Afghanistan will remain ablaze until right wins victory. This is the oath made in the mountains and valleys with the rising of the sun every day by thousands of Afghan fighters who are advancing toward the bastion of atheism in Kabul...."

—cited in Fred Halliday, "War and Revolution in Afghanistan," *New Left Review*, Jan.-Feb. 1980

Khomeini's regime was second only to General Zia's Pakistan in providing political and material support to the feudalist insurgency against the Soviet-backed Kabul regime.

Early this year the Soviet government assumed total control of the Afghan "revolution" through a coup. The Iranian foreign ministry promptly denounced it as a "hostile act against Iran and all Moslems of the world" (*New York Times*, 5 February). The SWP rushed to excuse the Iranian position as the nefarious work of those who did not follow the imam's line (the imam at the time suffering from a heart ailment): "Immediately after Soviet troops began moving into Afghanistan in large numbers, the Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement denouncing the move, but Khomeini himself did not speak out against it" (*Intercontinental Press*, 21 January). But when the imam got back in action, he disabpled his SWP lawyers by declaring "unconditional support" for the Afghan feudalists: "We totally support the brave and Moslem people of Afghanistan" (*New York Times*, 12 February).

On the few occasions when the SWP admits the relations between Teheran and Kabul are not exactly sisterly, it blames the conflict on the latter's "sectarianism." This is the tack taken by the Jenness pamphlet (and is in keeping with the SWP's condemnation of the Iranian Fedayeen's "sectarianism" in defending their very lives against



Time

Khomeini's criminal gangs).

Jenness goes on to commend Kabul for sending a message to Khomeini proposing fraternal relations right after the Soviet-backed coup. But the Stalinists at least took some account of reality. As part of the Kremlin's current "peace offensive," Kabul announced Soviet troops could be withdrawn from Afghanistan if the U.S., China, Pakistan and Iran ended their support to the reactionary forces (*New York Times*, 15 May). At least when their own heads are at risk, the Stalinists are less conciliatory to the reactionary theocracy in Teheran than the shameless SWP. ■

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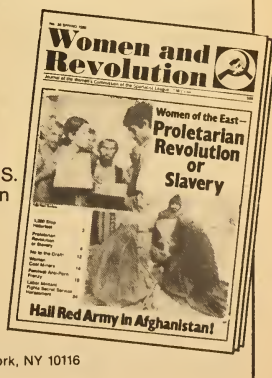
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Leftists at Teheran University aid comrade assaulted by Khomeini's thugs.

Kazemi/Stern

SWP/HKE: The Blood Is On Your Hands!

The following leaflet by the New York Spartacist League was distributed at a Socialist Workers Party (SWP) forum on Iran on May 4 just days after the most savage attack to date by Khomeini's Islamic reaction against the Iranian left. The main target of this attack was the left-populist Fedayeen, which fought back against the right-wing student and lumpen gangs. Yet the SWP and its Iranian protégés, the HKE, actually defended Khomeini's blood-purge of the left, denouncing the Fedayeen as "sectarian" for defending themselves.

We recognize that the construction of a Trotskyist party in Iran will no doubt draw many of its cadres from those who prove able to transcend the left-Stalinist limitations of the Fedayeen. The Fedayeen are fighters, against the shah and—reluctantly—against the attacks of the clerical right.

By contrast, the HKE has never fought anyone for anything. Its core cadres were trained as petty-bourgeois students in the U.S. in the "peaceful, legal" school of the reformist SWP. Only a few months before the outbreak of mass struggles against the shah, these craven opportunists

rejected the slogan, "Down with the shah!," as ultra-left. They gained further notoriety by fingering rival Iranian student radicals to the Houston cops. All this was good practice for their current role in Iran, where a decade from now the HKE will be remembered as the "leftists" who justified the murderous right-wing attacks on the Fedayeen. The most significant thing the HKE will ever do is to hideously discredit the name of Trotskyism in Iran.

The HKE learned its criminal tailism of Islamic reaction from the SWP, which more so than any other large American left group has glorified the Khomeinist movement. While the SWP did not literally term the veil "progressive," as incorrectly stated in the leaflet, it does defend this barbaric institution of women's enslavement:

"Some women who never wore the veil are now doing so as a symbol of national liberation. Some wear it in opposition to western dress styles that turn women into sex objects."

—*"Revolution Opens Road to Liberation of Women,"* Intercontinental Press, 17 December 1979

The future cadres of a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Iran will have to absorb the lessons that Khomeini and his

mullahs did not "betray" the revolution but intended from the beginning to build a clerical dictatorship, and that genuine national liberation from imperialism requires a struggle leading the oppressed masses to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

* * * * *

Crazy Carter's bungled imperialist "Mission Impossible" in Iran demonstrates he will do anything to stay in office as he drives toward World War III. The Spartacist League says, "Hands Off Iran!" But unlike the SWP and their cohorts in Iran, the HKE, we do not defend the equally crazy "Imam" Khomeini who also will do anything to consolidate his Persian chauvinist, Shi'ite Islamic theocracy. Khomeini opposes imperialism only when it stands in the way of plunging Iran back into the seventh century. He has no qualms about using American Phantom jets and helicopter gunships to massacre Kurdish rebels in Sanandaj. He offers "unconditional support" to his fellow Islamic clergymen in Afghanistan when they are tools of U.S. imperialism and the CIA. Khomeini and the Afghan mullahs and the U.S. imperialists know that their main enemy is the Soviet Union. It was the October Revolution which broke the reactionary social power of mosque and bazaar as it liberated the Moslem borderlands from imperialist subjugation. We call for unconditional military support to Iran against imperialist attack in order to open the road for the October of the Iranian working masses which will sweep away Khomeini and all the exploiters, capitalist and pre-capitalist.

During April dozens of leftist students were murdered and hundreds were injured as Khomeini sent his "Islamic Revolution" onto the campuses to "purge" them of "Marxist" influence. At Friday evening prayer services on April 18, the prayer leader at Teheran University called for ridding the campuses of pictures of Lenin and hammers and sickles. Within hours Teheran University was stormed by knife-, club- and gun-wielding Islamic thugs, the *Hezbollahi* or "people of the party of god." These are the lumpen gangs recruited and bribed by the mosque with CIA money to bring down bourgeois-nationalist prime minister Mossadegh in 1953 and restore the shah to power. The *Hezbollahi* attacks upon the left, nationalist and secular organizations last August paved the way for Khomeini to ban all political parties and papers, making the universities the last refuge of organized left-wing propaganda. Now Khomeini has determined to completely annihilate such groups as the populist Fedayeen Khalq, the radical Islamic Mujahedeen and the pro-Moscow Stalinist Tudeh. The Fedayeen who barricaded themselves in buildings at Teheran University report that twenty of their comrades were murdered. In provincial universities the Islamic goons were even more vicious. At the university in Shiraz more than 400 were injured.

The SWP/HKE have praised the veil, the symbol of the Islamic enslavement of women, as "progressive" (which is like praising the chains of a black slave as "progressive"); they have denied the right of the oppressed nationalities of Iran to self-determination; they have supported Khomeini's Persian chauvinism to the point of backing Iran in their border war with Iraq; they have hailed as "brothers" the *Pasdars*—"revolutionary guards"—the hated butchers of the workers, leftists, Kurds, Arabs and other minorities.

Now they have carried their criminal support to Khomeini's "Islamic revolution" to its logical conclusion: they hail the bloody purge of leftists on the campuses and denounce as "sectarian opposition" those who try to defend their organizations and their very lives from the Shi'ite clergy's stormtroopers.

The SWP—like Carter over his Iranian military escapades—has taken full responsibility for its Iranian cronies' defense of the massacre of leftists. In an article titled "Why Carter Fears 'Unraveling Authority' in Iran" (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 May/*Militant*, 9 May), the SWP quotes from an HKE statement published on April 21 at the height of the Islamic goon attacks upon campus leftists:

"The Tudeh Party, Mujahedeen, Fedayeen, Paykor and other so-called Marxist organizations, which always start from their own narrow, sectarian interests, have essentially opposed this brave action. These forces, under the pretext of defending the 'barricade of freedom' (these organizations think that reaction has taken over the country and that the campuses are the last bastion) have mobilized against the action of the ISOs [Islamic Student Organizations]."

The ISOs were the first to mobilize around Khomeini's demand for the "Islamification" of the universities. *Hezbollahi* merely carried out this demand in a "revolutionary" fashion. Khomeini's governing "Revolutionary Council" then adopted this slogan and closed the universities in order to complete the "Islamification."

This recent betrayal places the HKE far to the right of Tudeh which was so subservient to Khomeini that they have been derisively referred to as "assistant ayatollahs." By this act the HKE is traitor to every principle the labor and socialist movements stand for. As if to compound their crime by showing the spoils as well as the dead bodies, the *Militant* carries in the middle of its article a large photo caption showing the last of the imprisoned HKE members leaving jail and stating that "in Iran, deepening revolutionary ferment has created an atmosphere open to debate of different viewpoints." Tell that to the Fedayeen who lost 20 comrades at Teheran University. With the SWP's full approval, the HKE has offered up the lives of Iranian leftists to Islamic reaction to save their own skins. But for the East the 1965 Indonesian coup demonstrated on a massive and catastrophic scale, for those even remotely connected to the left, that opportunism saved nobody's skin including their own. ■

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Trotsky addresses Red Army during revolutionary war against Pilsudski's Poland.

The Bolsheviks and the "Export of Revolution"

Of all the fake-left tendencies that have opposed the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, not many have tried to rationalize their objectively pro-imperialist line by referring to the policies of Lenin's Bolsheviks. One such attempt to misuse historical analogies, made by the Klon-skyite Peking-loyal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) [CP-ML] in the U.S., is particularly noteworthy because it takes the form of a polemic against the Spartacist League.

In an article entitled "Trotskyites: Moscow's New Cheerleaders" the CP-ML's Carl Davidson singled out our slogan "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" as the "best example" of Trotskyist support to so-called "Soviet expansionism" (*Call*, 28 January). Most of Davidson's diatribe is devoted to trying to prettify the Afghan mullahs and tribal chiefs leading the "freedom fighters." But the article winds up by linking our Soviet defensist position to what Davidson claims is the original sin of Trotskyism:

"The problem is that they are wedded to a piece of dogma that goes all the way back to Leon Trotsky himself. Part of Trotsky's ultra-'leftism' was the argument that, since it was impossible to build socialism in one country, especially

where the majority were peasants, then the new Soviet power would have to save itself by launching its armies on the rest of Europe. This view of 'exporting revolution' was blasted by both Lenin and Stalin as ridiculously and dangerously adventurist, even at a time when the Soviet Union was revolutionary."

The assertion that we advocate "Soviet expansionism" is a patent lie, as is obvious to anyone who reads our press. But by adding this charge to Trotsky's alleged support for "exporting revolution," Davidson hopes to hoodwink those unfamiliar with the Stalinist school of falsification. For this slander isn't Davidson's brainchild. It comes straight out of the Stalinist "classics." For example, S. Rabinovich's revisionist *History of the Civil War* (1935) condemns Trotsky for allegedly wanting to "bring the revolution to Europe on the bayonets of the Red Army."

A reexamination of the question of "revolution from without" is in order in view of much of the left's support to the imperialist hue and cry over Afghanistan. For even as the Bolsheviks rejected the program of "revolution from

without," they still upheld the principle and perspective of using the Red Army to promote revolutions abroad.

The Russo-Polish War

The issue of making "revolution from without" arose among the Bolsheviks as a result of the Russo-Polish war of 1920. Its formulation and the ensuing debate were organically linked to the course and outcome of that war.

In April 1920 Joseph Pilsudski, the bourgeois-nationalist "Liberator" of Poland, launched an unprovoked attack on the Soviet forces in the Ukraine. Backed by French imperialism, Pilsudski had ambitions to recreate "Greater Poland" by bringing the Ukraine and parts of the Baltic states back under Polish rule. The Soviet government, which had been desperately trying to negotiate a peace with Poland, was taken unprepared and was forced to abandon Kiev and much of the Ukraine. But the Red Army mustered fresh forces and in June launched a successful counterattack that sent the overextended Polish armies reeling in disorderly retreat. By the end of June the Soviet armies had advanced almost unopposed right up to the border of national Poland. The question was then posed point blank: whether to conclude peace with Pilsudski or to go over to the offensive in a revolutionary war against Poland? It was this agonizingly difficult question that the Bolshevik Politburo debated.

No Bolshevik leader considered revolutionary war against Pilsudski's Poland impermissible in principle. Rather the debate centered on two interrelated, empirical questions. One, would the Red Army's advance into Poland ignite a proletarian uprising leading to peasant aid to the Soviet forces, mutinies among Pilsudski's troops, etc.? Two, how would the Soviet peoples, devastated by six years of war and civil war, stand up to a new major war? The stronger the indigenous revolutionary forces in Poland, the less the demands on the offensive capacity of the Red Army and behind it on the Russian and Ukrainian masses.

Of the top Bolshevik leaders Trotsky alone advocated negotiation of an immediate peace with Poland. Writing later in his 1930 autobiography, Trotsky explained his position as follows:

"Even more perhaps than any one else, I did not want this war, because I realized only too clearly how difficult it would be to prosecute it after three years of continuous civil war...."

"A point of view that the war which began as one of defense should be turned into an offensive and revolutionary war began to grow and acquire strength. In principle, of course, I could not possibly have any objection to such a course. The question was simply one of the correlation of forces. The unknown quantity was the attitude of the Polish workers and peasants."

—My Life

Trotsky believed that a Russian offensive against Pilsudski could hope to succeed only if a proletarian revolution broke out early on in Poland. And he had good reason to doubt that a communist revolution in Poland was so imminent. He listened to the sober estimates of such leading Polish Communist émigrés as Julian Marchlewski and Karl Radek. Marchlewski evidently spared no effort to persuade the Russian Politburo not to undertake the invasion of Poland. But perhaps none was so opposed to a war with Poland as was Radek, who believed that Russian troops marching on Polish soil, even if they raised the

banner "For our freedom and yours!", would be regarded by the masses as conquerors and not liberators. Radek urged the Bolshevik leaders to let the Polish revolution mature on its own before sending Russian troops to its aid.

There was a definite logic to this position. If the Soviet government were to conclude a peace with Pilsudski, then both the Red Army and the Polish Communists would buy time to better gather forces for the offensive. If Pilsudski were to reject a generous Soviet peace offer, making war inevitable, then the Polish masses would be able to see clearly who was the real aggressor.

Of the other Bolshevik leaders Lenin was most resolutely in favor of going over to the offensive against Poland. No doubt Lenin was impressed by the effect on the Soviet forces of Pilsudski's attack on the Ukraine. The Red Army certainly appeared ready and willing to rout the retreating, demoralized units of the Polish army. But what seemed to have clinched the question for Lenin were the reports he received from resident Polish Communists like Felix Kon and P.L. Lapinski. Kon and Lapinski, who came from the anti-Luxemburgist wing of the old Polish socialist movement and would therefore presumably be sensitive to the national sentiments of the Polish masses, predicted imminent revolution in Warsaw.

Moreover, Lenin fixed his gaze on Berlin. Revolution indeed seemed imminent in Germany. Only a few months earlier the German proletariat had defeated the right-wing Kapp putsch with a general strike and also had prevented French munitions shipments from reaching Poland after Pilsudski's attack on the Ukraine. In a revolutionary war against Poland the stakes were enormous. A Soviet Poland would remove the last bulwark sealing off the October Revolution from Germany. If only the Soviets could deliver the *coup de grace* to Pilsudski, the entire Treaty of

continued on page 29

Joseph Pilsudski's unprovoked attack on Soviet Ukraine led Bolsheviks to launch revolutionary war on Poland.



UPI

Open Letters to the Parity Committee

Beset for years by endemic factionalism, Ernest Mandel's Potemkin Village "Fourth International," the United Secretariat (USec), lost perhaps a third of its membership last fall when the international followers of Latin American political adventurer Nahuel Moreno, the Bolshevik Faction (BF), split. While posturing as a left opposition within the USec, the Morenoites then turned around and made a rotten bloc with the social-democratic, virulently anti-Soviet, French-centered organization of

Pierre Lambert. The Moreno/Lambert lash-up, called the Parity Committee, has called for an "open conference" of "all forces claiming to be Trotskyist." Since some militants might be taken in by the Parity Committee's pretensions to "orthodox" Trotskyism, we responded to this "unity" maneuver through a series of open letters. We reprint below the letter of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD) and lengthy excerpts from that of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF).

You Call for Counterrevolution in East Germany

Frankfurt
8 May 1980

Open Letter to the Members of the Parity Committee
Comrades:

The Parity Committee has repeatedly issued calls for an "Open Conference" of "all forces claiming to be Trotskyist." The Parity Committee has called for national gatherings to prepare such a conference before the end of 1980 (*Tribune Ouvrière* No. 6, 29 February 1980). A direct invitation to participate was sent to the TLD via your Hamburg BF supporter M. in November of last year. The TLD, German section of the iSt [international Spartacist tendency], hereby accepts the invitation to be present as observers at such national gatherings and at the "Open Conference."

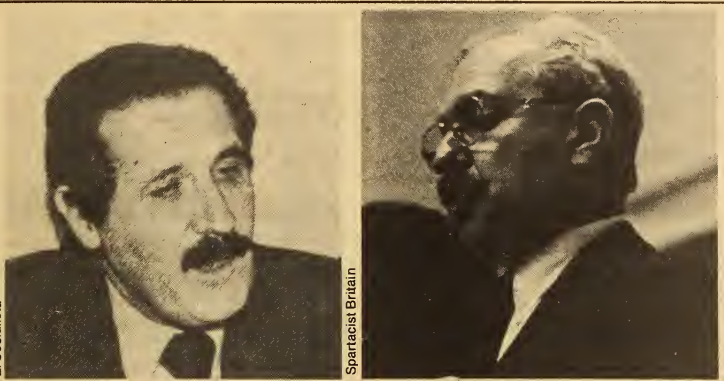
At the same time we recognize reality for what it is. The "Parity Committee" is not a "united front" but a rotten bloc between Lambert and Moreno with some formally orthodox rhetoric on Nicaragua as window-dressing to cover its real purpose: an organizational maneuver to trump Mandel by playing the card of "unity." The German components of the Parity Committee disagree on central political issues, not least of all on the question of the Trotskyist program, uniquely represented by the TLD. German BF sympathizers have in the past expressed their readiness to discuss with the TLD the political questions on which the Parity Committee is ostensibly based. In contrast Werner Uhde, a member of the CC of the International Workers Association (ISA), which is affiliated to the [Lambertist] Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, has publicly stated: "The Parity Committee has decided that the iSt stands outside the workers movement"—an offensive and utterly groundless slander, worthy of a Gerry Healy or a Stalin.

Given the political differences within the Parity Committee, its calls for the "unity" of ostensible Trotskyists make a mockery of a principled fight for programmatic clarity, for reforging the Fourth International. And on Afghanistan, the question on which the forces of the Parity Committee are in agreement, they have adopted a counterrevolutionary position. Thus the Italian section of the BF headlined its article on Afghanistan "Soviet Troops out of Afghanistan" (*Avanzata Proletaria*, 12 January) and, wholly in line with the OCI [Organisation Communiste Internationaliste]/Parity Committee position that the movements led by Khomeini and the Afghan mullahs do not have a "religious character," called for spreading the "Iranian revolution" into the Soviet Union—that is, for capitalist restoration! This is not surprising coming from the ISA, which would love to see Helmut Schmidt overthrow Honecker, in order to install an SPD regime in a reunified—capitalist—Germany. But it should destroy any illusions in the "leftism" of the Parity Committee on the part of anyone seriously considering himself a Trotskyist. And Moreno's idealization of Third World bonapartists, even in their most anti-communist form, might logically



Photoworld
1953 East Berlin workers uprising pointed toward revolutionary reunification of Germany.

"Son of Perón" Nahuel Moreno (left) meets "son of Mitterrand" Pierre Lambert (right).



lead to the formation of an "Imam Khomeini Brigade" to fight the Red Army in Afghanistan.

Whose Side Are You On?

When Afghan reactionaries and their Maoist allies attacked comrades of the TLD with knives on account of the TLD's position of defense of the Soviet Union, seriously wounding Fred Z., the Swedish section of the Bolshevik Faction issued a principled statement, saying that they considered it "our clear duty... to solidarize with the victims of this reactionary attack and [we] defend to the extent of our power those exposed to such a deliberate attack." Individual members of the BF in Germany also supported a protest statement circulated by the TLD. The ISA, to the contrary, refused to defend the TLD, even going so far as to say (together with the Islamic fanatics and the anti-Soviet Maoists) that the attack was "fully justified" (phone conversation with leading Berlin Lambertist Ingeborg S.).

SPD

The ISA, with its usual groveling policy toward the SPD [Social Democratic Party], calls for voting for the SPD in the coming elections. The BF, in an effort to appear to the left, opposes voting for the SPD. But this is scarcely out of principled opposition to the SPD's alliance with the FDP [bourgeois-liberal Free Democratic Party] and its anti-working-class policies. For Moreno published a paper in Argentina "under the discipline of the High Council of General Perón" and in the mid-'70s urged a vote for the popular front "Frente Amplio" in Uruguay. All this is merely a cynical effort on the part of the Morenoites to attract those forces within the GIM [Mandelite Gruppe Internationale Marxisten] who are against voting for the SPD.

What will be the Parity Committee's position on the German elections? The USec has already offered us a farce, with the same issue of *Was Tun* explaining that while the (bare) majority of the GIM opposes voting for the SPD, Ernest Mandel and the USec are in favor of it. And this is all presented as "democratic centralism"! When history occurs the first time as farce, what can the Parity Committee version of it be?

ISA: Call for Counterrevolution in the DDR

The Morenoites made much ado about their criticisms of

the wretched USec document "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," loudly proclaiming that... the "existing proletarian dictatorships"—that is to say the deformed and degenerated workers states—were a million times [no less] superior to the bourgeois democracy existing in the imperialist countries" (*La dictature révolutionnaire du prolétariat*, pp. 249-250).

And with this position they are, of course, in the same organization with the ISA, which calls for the "unconditional reunification of Germany" through "free elections in all Germany without preconditions." That is to say, a capitalistically reunited Germany under Helmut Schmidt, who, with his Stammheim prison, would in a situation of revolutionary upsurge certainly not take a back seat to Scheidemann and Noske.

In contrast to the long-standing social-democratic Stalinophobia of the OCI/ISA (anyone who opposes the evil Stalinists must be good, including the people who go around shooting communist school teachers in Afghanistan, a country with 90 percent illiteracy), the TLD stands for unconditional defense of the social gains of the deformed and degenerated workers states, while simultaneously calling for a political revolution to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucrats and for the international extension of the proletarian revolution. The revolutionary reunification of Germany can take place only when, under the leadership of a Trotskyist party, the masses carry out the political revolution in the DDR [East Germany] and the social revolution in West Germany. While placing no trust whatsoever in the bureaucracy, we defend the right of these states to defend themselves against imperialist attack and against attempts at capitalist restoration within, even when the bureaucrats' bankrupt policies lead to "defense" by such bureaucratic methods as the Berlin Wall.

Abandon All Hope, Ye Who Enter the Parity Committee

In West Germany the Parity Committee simply means subordination to the ISA's social-democratic Stalinophobia, to its deep entrisms into the SPD, to its love for Helmut Schmidt.

However, in an effort to provide an orthodox cover for their power politics (Lambert and Moreno dividing the
continued on next page

world between them in their own wretched version of Potsdam), the Parity Committee raises a number of issues of genuine importance. In order to seriously debate these issues, as well as to point to the unprincipled character of the Parity Committee, we wish to be present at the "Open Conference." But in fact the Parity Committee cannot afford to permit such a debate to take place. For only the international Spartacist tendency has systematically defended Trotskyist positions on the issues raised by the Parity Committee.

We have, since the inception of our tendency in the '60s, fought for the position that the Fourth International was destroyed as the world party of socialist revolution by Pablo, Mandel & Co. in 1951-53—and therefore for the necessity of reforging the Fourth International (and not patching together some rotten bloc and calling it the "reconstructed" or "reorganized" Fourth International).

From 1960-61 the Revolutionary Tendency, predecessor of the iSt, fought against the capitulation of the SWP [American Socialist Workers Party] leadership to Castro and for the position that Cuba had become a deformed workers state: for this reason we opposed the 1963 reunification and were expelled from the SWP (although we were willing to accept the discipline of the United Secretariat had we been permitted to continue to fight for our positions nationally and internationally). While the SWP was capitulating to Castroism, while Moreno in the 1960s was fancying himself an ersatz guerrilla (before executing a sharp turn in the 1970s and referring to guerrillas in Argentina as the "mirror image" of the extreme right-wing Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance), and while the OCI for 18 years denied that any social revolution at all had taken place in Cuba, the iSt alone upheld the position that Cuba was a deformed workers state and that the task of Trotskyists was to build a party and lead a political revolution there.

Anyone interested in seriously debating these issues will have to come to grips with the program and the political practice represented today by the Spartacist tendency. The politically bankrupt Parity Committee is able only to try to seal off its members and sympathizers from this debate through the use of slanders, lies and—where the relation of forces permits, as in France—by physical violence against the iSt.

for the CC of the TLD
Wolfgang Hohmann

Mullah-loving Stalinophobia

To the Leadership Committee of the LCI [Ligue Communiste Internationaliste, French representative of the Parity Committee]:

As political organizations go, the life of the LCI promises to be relatively brief and, by all accounts, fairly brutal.

Banners flying, you marched out of the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, French section of the USec] congress last October, loudly proclaiming that nothing

short of a revolutionary Trotskyist party and program was needed in Nicaragua. You promised a new beginning for Trotskyism in France to a couple of hundred LCR militants who, having had it with the gross liquidationism of Mandel, Krivine & Co., and scenting a split in the air, had in a short period of time swollen the ranks of the LTT [Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency of the USec]. But where is the LCI today? It is on the side of the CIA-backed mullahs in Afghanistan, with LCI militants confined to cell meetings with no political life; there is no discussion, contrary to what might have been expected given the heterogeneous and turbulent nature of the split; they are speculating on the *date* of the fusion with the [Lambertist] OCI, not the need for it; they are campaigning for the election of Marchais and Mitterrand—again. Like in the LCR. Only the formulations on the petitions have changed.

From the beginning, you, the LCI leadership, have done everything to erect a watertight barrier between leftists in the LCI and the LTF. If there were a "Spartacist" faction in the LCI, it would be based on a Trotskyist program and counterposed both to the vile social-democratic Stalinophobia of Lambert-Nemo and the centrist tailism of the Pabloites. It is *you* who have insisted that any militant in the LCI runs the risk of being Spartacist-baited if he has any reservations about the OCI or thinks he can fight to correct its course—and of course if he asks too many questions or even wants to read for himself our assessment of his organization. You didn't like it very much when a month after the formation of the LCI we asked the awkward question: "Will Nemo put the Lambertist handcuffs on the LCI? Whither the LCI?"

That our polemics touched a nerve, we can tell from your response: physical intimidation, threats to "write us out" of the workers movement, cop-baiting and other slanders—Stalin-style intimidation tactics designed to stifle political debate in the LCI. On 13 November 1979 OCI goons attacked our salesmen in front of the Mutualité, and LCI members were forced to condone such attacks or be suspected of having sympathies for the LTF. One is reminded of an analogous tactic used, albeit on a different level, by the Greek Stalinists, who involved new members in assassinating Trotskyists in order to draw a bloodline.

The provocateur-baiting didn't work very well: the most blustering of the bullies had to back down. The cynicism behind your slanders is glaring; many of your cadre, not to mention some of your Paris and Rouen militants, worked for years with comrades who are now militants in the LTF....

While the worst insinuations have died down, at least in public, the attempts at physical intimidation continue. In addition anyone known to have ever been close to the LTF is denied entry into the LCI, forced to sign a compromising confession or, once inside, hounded and denied the right to fight for political positions not drawn entirely from [the OCI's] *Informations Ouvrières*. Truly, the LCI is rapidly becoming a Lambertist gulag. When will the show trials start? Even you, the leaders, are so fearful of being influenced by the Spartacist "virus" that you won't even handle mail from the LTF. When you returned our *Tribune Ouvrière* sub, we had a good laugh. But when you returned our press release concerning the attack against our comrade Fred Zierenberg, we characterized you for what you are: fearful little sectarian bureaucrats, mullah-loving Stalinophobes....

As we predicted, the formally leftist position expressed on Nicaragua, which the LTT and Moreno's Bolshevik Faction used as a pretext to split the USec, was soon shown to be episodic. Iran and especially Afghanistan revealed the real politics of the leaders of the "Parity Committee." As we said in a leaflet distributed to the Second Congress of the LCR:

"In a grotesque caricature of their typical enthusiasm for non-revolutionary forces, all wings of the USec (as well as the OCI) are guilty of the criminal betrayal of supporting the mullahs. They were all united in arguing that Khomeini's rise to power was a victory for the workers and they all continued to call for the defense of the Iranian 'revolution' when their own comrades were arrested and threatened with execution. And they were all united in denouncing the iSt's slogan 'Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!' as sectarian and counterrevolutionary."

And sure enough, the OC and the Morenoites joined in glorifying the spectacular diversion from the struggles of the working masses and national minorities which the seizure of the U.S. embassy by Khomeini-loyal "Islamic students" represented.

Then, when the Red Army entered Afghanistan to put down reactionary uprisings by various monarchist and religious tribal groupings who in collaboration with the CIA wanted to establish an "Islamic Republic" on the borders of the Soviet Union, modeled on that of Imam Khomeini or General Zia in Pakistan, you hurried, together with the Morenoites and the OCI, to attack... the Red Army!... The LTF's slogans, "Hail Red Army" and "Extend the Gains of the October Revolution" draw the class line in Afghanistan today. But you, who were so proud of your opposition to boycotting the Moscow Games when you were in the LCR, you jump back into line when Lambert snaps his fingers and you now refuse to defend the gains of the October Revolution at a time when imperialist threats against the Soviet Union are on the rise.

The OCI's line on Afghanistan represents the latest counterrevolutionary expression of its Stalinophobia: anyone, even the reactionary mullahs, who opposes the Stalinists must have something going for them. This is the same Stalinophobic method that the LTT and the OCI applied to Portugal in the summer of 1975, solidarizing with the SP [Socialist Party]-led, CIA-backed "mass mobilizations" which were attacking and burning Communist Party headquarters. At the time the Morenoites pretended to a left oppositional stance in the USec; now they take up the anti-Soviet cause in Afghanistan, befitting their identification with Third-Worldist nationalists even in their most reactionary forms.

Today, these Stalinophobic tinpot bureaucrats say they are setting up a conference supposedly open "to all

Trotskyist organizations." Of course we understand that the OCI and its agents in the LCI leadership reserve for themselves the right to pass judgement on who can or cannot lay claim to being Trotskyist. We challenge the Parity Committee to admit us as observers to their "open conference." Let us see who can justifiably lay claim to Leninist principles and Trotskyist clarity in the light of their political past...

Who Are the Real Trotskyists?

Since its inception the Spartacist tendency has maintained that the Fourth International was destroyed in 1951-53 by Pabloite revisionism. The goal of the LTF and the iSt is not to throw itself into a series of unprincipled maneuvers based on the idea that there is a "family" of Trotskyism, reshuffling and patching together currently existing organizations with counterposed and incompatible political positions. All that would remain is to rebaptize this bastard product the "reconstructed" or "reorganized" Fourth International. Our fight is to reforge the democratically centralized world party of revolution. Our struggle for an authentic Trotskyist tendency united by program and governed by international democratic centralism is the complete opposite of your unprincipled "combinationism": that is why you are forced to attack us, sometimes in hilariously self-contradictory fashion. Thus in the space of a week you ludicrously tried to amalgamate us with the highly dubious Michel Varga by saying that we claimed "to be" the Fourth International (interview with Nemo, *Informations Ouvrières*, 17-24 November [1979]), then turned around and attacked us for our real position: fighting for the rebirth of the Fourth International (*Tribune Ouvrière*, 24 November [1979]). In the course of two decades of struggle to reforge the Fourth International, our tendency has grown from a nucleus in North America into an international current which must be reckoned with by all those who pay lip service to Trotskyism. We have regrouped many subjectively revolutionary militants from the United Secretariat. And we did it not by adapting our politics to form rotten blocs which are as unstable as they are unprincipled, but by remaining faithful to the Trotskyist program which is borne out every day in life, from Cuba to Afghanistan. If the Parity Committee were what it claims to be, it would have a burning interest in debating the positions of the iSt—if only to prove us wrong. We know that the OCI, the LCI and the Parity Committee will do everything in their power to make any real discussion impossible during its "open conference"—if there ever is such a conference. But just as Trotsky did not give up his struggle to win over subjectively revolutionary elements from the Stalinist parties, we will not abandon the militants of the LCI to the bureaucratic handcuffs of Nemo, Just and Lambert.

20 March 1980

for the LTF,
 —Thimbault (LCR, 1966-76, Rouen City Executive)
 —Lesueur (LCR, 1967-74, Central Committee)
 —Cochise (LCR, 1968-76, Renault-Cléon, CGT)
 —Antoine (LCR, 1968-75, Société Générale)
 —Igor (LCR, 1971-74, Société Générale, CGT, CFDT)
 —Daru (LCR, 1972-76, Elbeuf)
 —Hamid (LCR, 1972-77, SNCF, Rouen)
 —Clément (LCR, 1973-76, Elbeuf)

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Lamentable Liaison Committee

The Anti-Spartacists

The following was originally published as a supplement (23 May) of Le Bolchévick, organ of the Ligue Trotskyste de France.

Ernest Mandel's parody of Trotskyism—the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), whose components have found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades from Portugal 1975 to Afghanistan 1980—seems to be producing rotten-bloc images of itself through cloning. First, in a spectacular split last fall over the pretext of Nicaragua, it gave birth to the "Parity Committee for the Reorganization (Reconstruction) of the Fourth International," an alliance of French crypto-social democrat Pierre Lambert and Argentine would-be caudillo Nahuel Moreno that is every bit as unprincipled as the United Secretariat. Now the Parity Committee has generated its own replica in miniature, the "Trotskyist International Liaison Committee (for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International)." The three giants of this micro-USec are the Workers Socialist League (WSL) of Britain, the Gruppo Bolscevico-Leninista (GBL) of Italy and the Chilean Liga Obrera Bolchevique (LOB).

For a time it looked as if Lambert/Moreno would attract the flotsam and jetsam thrown off by previous outbursts of factionalism in the USec. Their talk of an independent Trotskyist party in Nicaragua and defense of leftists from Sandinista repression gave them a militant image. But when Afghanistan tore off this cover to reveal the deep underlying Stalinophobia—calling for military support to anti-Soviet Islamic reactionary guerrillas—the wavering centrists got cold feet. Roberto Massari's Revolutionary Marxist Faction, after seeking and being refused attendance at Mandel & Co.'s "Eleventh World Congress," retaliated by publishing voluminous correspondence showing how it unsuccessfully tried to crawl back into the USec and declared itself independent. Guillermo Lora's Fourth Internationalist Tendency called down a "plague on both your houses," finding the USec split of no interest in its struggle to form an "anti-imperialist front" with the Latin American "national" bourgeoisie. And the WSL/GBL/LOB founded a home for the Orphan Annies of pseudo-Trotskyism.

Conceived in opportunism, born of a marriage of convenience, the Liaison Committee has only one reason for being: anti-Spartacism. It set as its goal "to drive out all forms of revisionism from within the Fourth International" (which one—the USec, Parity Committee, Healyites, Posadistas or Vargaitees?). Thus behind its anti-Pabloist rhetoric is the bankrupt conception of a "family of Trotskyism." The first public statement of the new grouping declared, "After political agreement has been reached on strategic principles and fundamental attacks, the Liaison Committee intends to form itself into a democratic-centralist international Faction" (*Socialist Press*, 13 February 1980). Thereby the WSL/GBL/LOB admit that their bloc is based on neither democratic

centralism nor agreement on strategic principles. But if after two years of cohabitation their goal is not achieved, the high contracting parties agree in advance to separate.

In the meantime, the Liaison Committee's lack of basic programmatic agreement has not stopped it from publishing a series of leaflets on current events from Afghanistan to Peru. Its Afghanistan flyer "condemn[s] the intervention of the Soviet troops" but also warns that "a withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan... would also give a major boost to the policies of imperialism." This is about as clear as a barrel of tar. But as soon as the bourgeois press bemoaned the suppression of a shopkeepers' "strike" in the Kabul bazaar, the WSL solidarized with the "masses" against the Soviet army. With this position (some abstract verbiage about defense of the USSR notwithstanding), it's a toss-up whether the authors belong in the muddled USec or the anti-Soviet Parity Committee. Clearly, though, they flee from the hard Trotskyist line of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) which proclaimed "Hail Red Army!" against Afghan reaction.

The Liaison Committee wants to inhabit more or less the same niche on the USec's left flank, occupied in 1976-77 by the short-lived "Necessary International Initiative." Hoping that their lash-up can help swing a deal with the "big-time" revisionists of the Parity Committee or USec, once again the bloc partners take their sweet time in facing up to fundamental programmatic differences. This time, even more than before, it is an Anti-Spartacist League. Each of the component groups has been centrally defined through confrontation with the iSt. And their rejection of a consistent Trotskyist policy has been sealed with betrayals. *The Liaison Committee is the combination of an Italian group that called for votes to the "Historic Compromise" of repression, austerity and clerical domination; a Chilean group which calls for votes to the key popular front of recent times, Allende's Unidad Popular, even after its bloody demise; and an English group whose principal leader is notorious for scabbing!*

WSL: Scabbing

Let's dissect this Anti-Spartacist League par excellence. The Liaison Committee was formed at a conference of the British Workers Socialist League in late December. But this came only after the WSL had been given the cold shoulder by both the USec and the Parity Committee, all in the space of six months. In August a draft agreement had been reached stating that despite "substantial differences," there was "the objective possibility of the WSL fusing with the USFI [USec]." This became a dead letter only when the USec backed out. Then the WSL resumed its on-again, off-again flirtation with the Morenoites and Lambertists, "welcoming" their initiative and formally applying to join the Parity Committee. However, Moreno/Lambert raised as a condition for entry that the WSL refer to them as "Trotskyists." Thereupon *Socialist Press* (19 December

1979) complained that "It begins to look as if the [Parity Committee] conference may not be as 'open' as it appeared...."

The WSL's relationship to the international Spartacist tendency is strictly involuntary: the WSL continues to produce and expel factions which solidarize with the program of the iSt. First there was the Trotskyist Faction (TF), which walked out with a fifth of the WSL's active membership, including two national committee members, three editorial board members, several regional and local organizers and two-thirds of the commission appointed to draft a reply to an iSt letter of June 1976. The fusion of the Trotskyist Faction with the London Spartacist Group gave birth to the Spartacist League/Britain in March 1978. In early 1980 this was followed by the Leninist Faction (LF), expelled with three more of the WSL's NCers, two more editorial board members, the head of the WSL youth group and the co-author of the main document against the TF. As a parting shot, the LF warned the WSL leadership to be on the lookout for a "Sverdlov Faction" and fused with the SL/B in early May.

The WSL bases its claims to Trotskyist orthodoxy on a document, "The Poisoned Well" (based on a quote by the American SWP's Jack Barnes!), which presents its analysis of the development of Pabloist revisionism after World War II. This documents claims that Pabloism is simply an empirical *method* (shades of Healy), rather than a program rejecting the basic tenets of Trotskyism, and locates its origins in "middle class and intellectual forces with little experience and few links to the working class." The WSL finds evidence of this method everywhere since World War II, thus ignoring its quintessential expression: the destruction of the Fourth International in 1951-53 as a result of Pablo's liquidationism. Not once does it mention the Spartacist tendency's nearly 20-year struggle for a consistent Trotskyist program, even when discussing the Cuban deformed workers state, where the iSt's contribution is inescapable for honest Marxists. The WSL seeks not to destroy those who have betrayed the banner of Trotskyism but to pressure or "educate" the Mandels, Lamberts and Morenos.

But most of all, this workerist document tries to provide a justification for the syndicalist practice of WSL leader Alan Thornett. Originating as a right split from Healyism, the Thornett tendency has always been nationally centered with the faintest hint of internationalism. And its left-Labourite trade unionism has led it to condone and even engage in scabbing as it tails after the backstabbing union bureaucrats, first in a national engineering strike and most recently in the bitter 12-week British steel strike.

GBL: Historic Compromise

The Italian Gruppo Bolscevico-Leninista, in contrast to Thornett's WSL, has been an ardent suitor of the iSt. The GBL was thrown out of the Lambertist OCRFI in 1975 for refusing to go along with Lambert's hysterical slander campaign labeling the highly dubious Michel Varga a CIA agent. That same year the GBL authored a document, "Theses on the Crisis of the Fourth International (Draft)," stating that of the forces claiming to be Trotskyist there was "an orthodox left wing, whose main component is the iSt." It added, "The 'Statement of Principles' of the Spartacist League (1966) may be taken as the basis for the



Spartacist Britain

Workers Socialist League leader Alan Thornett. He scabbed on engineering and steel workers strikes.

international regroupment of orthodox Trotskyism." More than two years of discussions ensued during which the GBL argued that despite sharp differences on two of the most controversial questions facing the left, it was principled for it to join the iSt as a faction. We replied that the goal of Trotskyists was not to build a phony "international," a mini-USec, that would fall apart at the first real test of the class struggle.

"Notoriously," wrote the GBL, "your organization holds the strange opinion that electoral support to a workers party involved or implicated in a Popular Front, or inclined toward it, equals capitulation to the Popular Front itself" (*Il Militante*, October 1976). According to the GBL, this "strange opinion"—our proletarian opposition to class-collaborationist coalitions—indicated a "sectarian attitude toward the mass movement." So since the masses consider the popular front their own, these "Trotskyists" tail along rather than patiently explain that this bourgeois formation is a deadly enemy of the workers movement. And we are not talking about just any old popular front but Enrico Berlinguer's "Historic Compromise" with Christian Democracy—the popular front in a priest's cassock which meant anti-working-class austerity, "strong state" witch-hunting against the far left, opposition to abortion and divorce, and support to NATO against the Soviet Union! So intent was the GBL in avoiding "sectarianism" toward the "mass movement" (read, the Eurocommunist PCI) that it insisted on voting for the Communist Party *against* the far-left Democrazia Proletaria slate. (The iSt also refused to support the latter, but for opposite reasons, because the DP simply wanted to pressure the PCI into a more left-wing, Chilean-style popular front.)

On the national question the GBL accused the iSt of feeling "the pressures of the Bronx" (i.e., capitulating to pro-Zionist imperialist public opinion) for refusing to support the Arab colonels and sheiks against Zionist Israel in the 1967 and 1973 Near East wars and for refusing to

continued on next page



Italian Communist Party (PCI) demonstration. Italian Gruppo Bolscevico-Leninista called for vote to PCI of "Historic Compromise" with papacy, austerity, repression and NATO.

Sipa

take sides in the 1974-76 communal war in Lebanon. Claiming that the Muslim side was really a popular front, the GBL declared that the massacre of the Christian village of Damur (in response to a massacre of the Muslim district of Qarantina in Beirut) had "no value from the Marxist viewpoint" ("First Balance Sheet of Discussions Between the iSt and GBL"). Well, in our modest view, Marxism is opposed to genocide. In the face of the GBL's critical support to the popular front and apology for communal violence, the iSt responded in a letter of 18 April 1977:

"As we have repeatedly pointed out to you, the iSt seeks principled regroupments and a cohesive (though certainly not monolithic) international tendency based on programmatic confluence. You are already aware that your positions on voting for reformist workers parties in popular front formations and on support to petty-bourgeois nationalist movements (such as in Lebanon and Angola) are considered by us to preclude such a principled fusion at this point. Your refusal to recognize this fact appears to indicate a serious difference on the organization question as well."

LOB: Voting for Allende

Unlike the WSL and GBL, the third group in the Liaison Committee bloc, the Chilean Liga Obrera Bolchevique, makes no pretense of internationalism. As the vehicle of a union caudillo, the LOB's only real claim to fame is to distribute in Europe a newspaper allegedly "coming from the interior" of Pinochet's bloody dictatorship. In exile its main activity is participating (along with the rest of the Chilean Trotskyoid groups) in a low-level propaganda bloc, the Committee for the Defense of Trade Union and Human Rights (CODESH), that is the likely starting point for a "far left" popular front. As for the LOB's *lider máximo*, he arrived in Europe in the fall of 1976 as the result of an international campaign waged by the Partisan Defense Committee and the iSt to rescue him from the bloody Videla junta in Argentina, where he had fled after the September 1973 Santiago coup. Unable to break from his syndicalist and viscerally anti-Leninist political origins,

he consequently parted ways with the Chilean Organización Trotskista Revolucionaria in mid-1977 as the OTR was joining the Spartacist tendency.

But the LOB has clearly stated its position on one question that was a main difference with the iSt: voting for Allende. Although terming the UP a "classical popular front," it emphatically insisted "revolutionaries could not remain aloof from the struggles waged by the proletariat to impose Allende as president." Thus, it was necessary to "convert the vote for Allende into a vote *against* the popular front" (*Alternativa Proletaria*, June 1978). That would be a neat trick indeed, seeing as the "comrade president" was the single candidate of the popular front!

The Spartacist tendency was unique in warning from the beginning that the "people's government" of the UP was a capitalist government, a roadblock that would have to be swept aside by revolutionary mobilization of the workers if a bloodbath were to be avoided. In contrast, the LOB "could not remain aloof" from the masses' illusions and, while muttering a few criticisms of the "limitations" of the UP, says it was necessary to tag along with Allende while reaction was rearming, preparing the bloody debacle. And that was in 1978, only a year after separating from the OTR. More recently the LOB signed a joint political declaration with the Izquierda Socialista (Socialist Left—ex-Dissident Faction of the MIR) which ignores the character of the UP altogether and raises "the slogan of a sovereign constituent assembly as centralizing the activities of the workers and people's movement" (*Lucha Socialista*, February 1979). So while the iSt calls for workers revolution to bring down the junta, the LOB/IS put forward a purely "democratic" program, leaving the door open for a political bloc with anti-Pinochet bourgeois forces.

Nine Points

The "Trotskyist International Liaison Committee" is a collection of cast-offs who are defined by their abject

willingness to compromise Marxist principles out of fear of isolation from the masses and by their hatred of the Spartacist tendency. There is a clear note of desperation in the pleas by the GBL and WSL to be allowed into an international—any international—and program be damned, so long as they can “discuss.” (The LOB could care less.) If there is a “family” of renegades from Trotskyism, these are certainly the poor relations. And the Liaison Committee clearly is going nowhere, for with their politics there is no principled reason why the various components should not end up with the USec or Parity Committee. As a measure of the difference between this small-time Menshevism and the Bolshevism of the iSt, one need only contrast the nine-point “programmatic” document adopted at the first meeting of the Liaison Committee with a nine-point platform raised three years ago by the Spartacist tendency as a potential basis for revolutionary regroupment with dissidents breaking to the left from the reformist and centrist USec leaderships.

The only hard line drawn in the document put forward by the GBL was against the iSt (declared, in the first paragraph, “to be considered as irreparably lost for orthodox Trotskyism”). For the rest, it is a collection of homilies and generalities about destroying capitalist society, the crucial importance of democratic tasks in “oppressed countries” and the need for “an international organization” based on “the Marxism of the present epoch.” (And what is that, a reader might ask. “Bolshevism-Leninism” says the document, adding in parentheses—why not a footnote?—that this is Trotskyism.) In contrast the draft declaration by Trotskyists expelled or driven out of the USec who now adhere to the Spartacist tendency called for:

- No political or electoral support to popular fronts; for conditional opposition to workers parties in open or implicit class-collaborationist coalitions;
- Uphold the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution; for proletarian leadership of the national/social struggle;
- For military support to petty-bourgeois nationalist forces fighting imperialism, but absolutely no political support to such forces; for Trotskyist parties in every country;
- Against violence within the workers movement;
- For unconditional defense of all the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialism; for political revolution against the bureaucracies; no



Gamma

Even with hindsight, Chilean Liga Obrera Bolivchique would vote for Allende's Unidad Popular, which paved way for Pinochet's white terror.

- political support to competing Stalinist cliques and factions;
- For communist fractions in the unions, based on the Transitional Program;
- For the communist tactic of the united front from above; for the tactic of regroupment to unite subjective revolutionaries in the vanguard party; for intransigent exposure of centrism;
- Rejection of the claims of ostensibly Trotskyist Internationals to speak for the Fourth International, destroyed by Pabloism in 1951-53;
- For the reforging of a democratic-centralist Fourth International which will stop at nothing short of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

These points constitute a program which was tested in Chile and Portugal, one which uniquely armed the Spartacist tendency to confront the rise of clerical reaction in Iran, when the rest of the left was bowing to Khomeini. This program prepared the iSt to stand at its post in the onset of a new Cold War while many ostensibly Trotskyist groups were tailing Carter's anti-Soviet “Human Rights” crusade and siding with CIA-backed mullahs in Afghanistan. This is a program to lead the proletariat to power, not for making slimy deals with Mandel! Break with all the centrist and reformist attempts, to tinker with the Trotskyist program! Join the iSt in the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, to build a granite hard world communist party the way Lenin and Trotsky did! ■

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Leninist Faction-SL/B Declaration of Fusion

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1. The Spartacist League (SL), British section of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), and the Leninist Faction, formerly of the Workers Socialist League (WSL), have fused on the basis of the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Comintern, the Founding Conference of the Fourth International, the Declaration of Principles of the SL/US, the nine points for international Trotskyist regroupment of the iSt, and the LF document, "The Fight for the Proletarian Programme." This fusion represents an important acquisition of cadre and strengthens the iSt's fight to forge the Leninist vanguard internationally. That LF cadres were among the most bitter opponents of the Trotskyist Faction (TF) which split from the WSL in 1979 to fuse with the London Spartacist Group and form the SL, is a powerful vindication of the Spartacist tendency's fight to polarise opponent organisations by hard programmatic combat on the key issues of the class struggle, and achieve qualitative growth through a process of splits and fusions. The ability of the SL to win these cadres must also be contrasted to the failure of our centrist opponents—such as Workers Power and the International-Communist League—to even respond seriously to the LF's approaches for discussions followings its expulsion from the WSL.

2. The Left Tendency (LT)—forerunner of the LF—was formed in May 1979 in opposition to the ever more rightward drift of the WSL, on the basis that a democratic-centrist international Trotskyist tendency must be built on clear programmatic agreement. It sought a road to international regroupment quite alien to the unprincipled lash-ups seen in Mandel's United Secretariat, Lambert and Moreno's Parity Committee, and today in the WSL's efforts to form an international pressure group on the larger fake-Trotskyist blocs—and a counterweight to the iSt—through its wretched Liaison Committee. Yet the LT was a left centrist grouping because it had no consistent revolutionary programmatic alternative to the WSL leadership.

It maintained an antipathy to the Trotskyism of the iSt, both on certain key programmatic questions, and in failing to understand the need for a fighting propaganda perspective in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International through the tactic of revolutionary regroupment. LT comrades, trained in the fake "mass work" methods of the WSL, only found their way towards the iSt's programme in the course of the factional struggle itself. Particularly in fighting the WSL's lumping together of Khomeini's Islamic reaction in Iran with the anti-Somoza upsurge in Nicaragua under the rubric of the "forward movement of the working class," and in the struggle against Alan Thornett's scabbing during the national engineering strikes, the LT comrades were forced to confront and recognise the unique correctness of iSt positions as varied

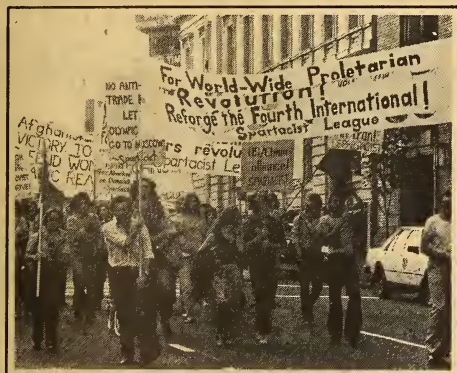
as proletarian opposition to Islamic reaction, the role of petty-bourgeois guerrillaism and the creation of deformed workers states, and how the picket line is the class line and means don't cross.

3. It was after such experiences and subsequent re-examination of the iSt programme on such critical questions of proletarian class strategy as unconditional opposition to popular fronts, the application of the Leninist position on the national question to Ireland, and the revolutionary struggle against Labourism, that the LF was formed. It was a faction equipped with the basic elements of a programmatic critique of the WSL, and an understanding that the struggle to consolidate a Leninist vanguard involves centrally the fight to remove the centrist and reformist obstacles in its path by head-on programmatic combat. The transition from the LT to the LF was consequently not simply a question of reaching abstract agreement with a revolutionary programme. It was the beginning of the LF comrades' opportunity to learn concretely the meaning of *Leninist functioning*—a mode of functioning antithetical to the Menshevik and semi-Healyite methods in which they had been previously trained. The fight for the Leninist conception of the party took place not only against the WSL but within the LF itself. The fight against one LF member—who, unwilling to face a sharp political struggle against the WSL and harbouring principled disagreements with the LF beneath a guise of votes for its political positions, rapidly responded by defection—was an important step towards consolidation of the faction.

4. In the period since the LF's bureaucratic expulsion from the WSL further programmatic discussion and joint work—particularly in the steel strike and in interventions against opponents on the issue of Afghanistan and the defence of the USSR—have prepared the ground for a deep-going fusion. The attendance and participation of LF members in SL internal meetings, and vice versa, has been valuable preparation for the task of forging a collective leadership in the fused organisation—evidenced in the fact that disputed questions were not debated simply along the old organisational lines. This was the case in the discussions on the need to break with elements of libertarianism in the LF's past organisational methods, on the fight for Bolshevik membership standards (which led to the dropping of one young member), and the many discussions on the precise content of and tactics for a communist propaganda intervention into the steel strike.

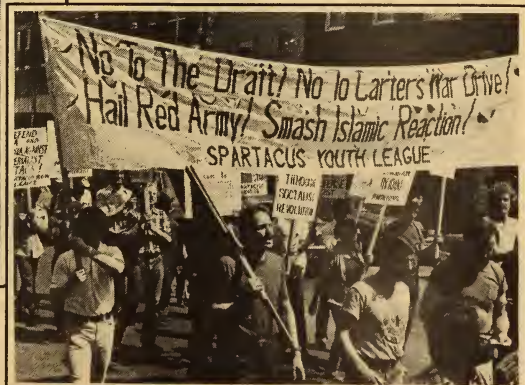
The challenge now confronting the SL is to integrate these new leading cadre in the process of forging a collective leadership. The accumulation of experienced cadres from our opponents will always be central to our further development and consolidation. Our success in Britain has so far largely been in winning forces from the WSL—since its formal "orthodox Trotskyism" and "anti-Pabloism" have left little choice for active left oppositionists but to seriously consider the authentically Trotskyist struggle of the iSt against centrist and reformist liquidationism. But the SL now goes forward strengthened, confident in the knowledge that oppositions in other opponent tendencies will in the future follow the road of the LF.

Forward to a British Trotskyist Party, Section of the Reforged Fourth International!



Clockwise from top left: Sydney, Berlin, Chicago, Rouen, Melbourne.

From Sydney to Berlin International Spartacist Tendency Marches on May Day



(Credits clockwise from top left: Australasian Spartacist, Spartakist, Workers Vanguard, Le Bolchévick, Australasian Spartacist.)

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Afghanistan and the Left...

(continued from page 4)

government couldn't supply it, the peasants were economically worse off than before.

In general the regime made no effort to neutralize its numerous social enemies by moderating the pace of reforms while simultaneously broadening its own base (e.g., sending large numbers of youth to study in the USSR, rapidly expanding the urban proletariat). At the same time, murderous cliquism, especially by Amin, eliminated much of the PDPA's original following. An ever smaller group of modernizing intellectuals was tending to be pitted against the mass of the people. The Taraki/Amin regime can thus be convicted of a large dose of utopian adventurism, seeking to drag Afghanistan into the twentieth century by purely military means, moreover, a military means it did not possess.

As the insurgency grew the army was riddled with desertions and mutinies, and the PDPA regime became ever more dependent on Soviet military support. By the summer of 1979 Amin commanded some 5,000 Soviet military cadre; they manned the sophisticated weaponry, especially flying combat aircraft. Without these Soviet forces it is more than possible the Kabul radical government would have fallen before the counterrevolution.

Those self-styled "Marxists" like Tariq Ali, who now maintain that the Afghan left-nationalists and feudalist reactionaries should be allowed to fight it out free of foreign interference, should logically have demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops well before the December coup. Here Khomeini and Brzezinski were, as usual, more consistent than their present left tailists. Last June the ayatollah read the riot act to the Soviet ambassador over his country's intervention in "Islamic" Afghanistan. A month later Carter's spiritual adviser Brzezinski denounced the Soviets for trying "to impose alien doctrines on deeply religious and nationally conscious peoples" ([London] *Guardian*, 6 August 1979).

There has been speculation in both the bourgeois and left press that the Soviets overthrew Amin because he was a "national communist," a budding Afghan Tito. Even leaving aside that he ruled through a section of the old bourgeois officer corps, this notion is utter nonsense. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan expanded precisely with the accession of Amin as premier in the spring of 1979, as he opted for a purely military solution to the rightist insurgency. Conversely, the Kremlin advocated slowing down the pace of reforms in order to minimize the need for direct Soviet military support to the petty-bourgeois radicals in Kabul. Amin evidently believed that however much trouble he got into with the counterrevolution, the Russians would be forced to bail him out.

And in a sense they did, though not exactly in the way he had expected. Here we have one of those ironies of history so appreciated by the late Isaac Deutscher. One wonders if the shade of Hafizullah Amin appreciates that in the end he won, though it cost him his own life. He provoked a situation in which the Soviets intervened with sufficient force to crush the reactionary insurgency and therefore with sufficient force to impose a social revolution on

backward, mullah-ridden Afghanistan.

Extend the Social Gains of the October Revolution!

Khomeini and Brzezinski to the contrary, Taraki/Amin's Afghanistan was not a Soviet Communist satellite, i.e., a deformed workers state. It was an unstable petty-bourgeois nationalist regime ruling through a shaky remnant of the old army. Facing a seemingly unwinnable civil war, a section of the PDPA might have tried to extricate itself by turning sharply to the right, expelling the Russians and making a deal with the Western imperialists for their backing against the rebels. From what we know of the ruthless, power-mad Amin, he was capable of emulating Chiang Kai-shek in 1927 or Anwar Sadat in 1972.

With its massive intervention in late December, the Soviet armed forces became the dominant power in Afghanistan, whose present fate will be decided in Moscow, not Kabul. Of course, the conservative bureaucrats in the Kremlin did not send 100,000 troops into Afghanistan to effect a social revolution, but simply to make secure an unstable, strategically-placed client state. No doubt Brezhnev & Co. would prefer a friendly bourgeois state like Finland. But Afghanistan is not Finland. There is no way that country can sustain anything remotely like a stable bourgeois democracy. In any case, the rightist insurgents and their imperialist backers are intransigent against any coalition government the Russians would accept. It is possible the Kremlin could do a deal with the imperialists to withdraw, for example, in return for NATO's reversing its decision to deploy hundreds of new nuclear missiles in West Europe. That would be a real counterrevolutionary crime against the Afghan peoples.

More likely is the Soviet army's prolonged occupation of Afghanistan and with it the possibility of its transformation along the lines of Soviet Central Asia or Mongolia. Social revolutionary measures (e.g., land to the tiller) would be necessary to erode and win over the poor peasant supporters of the reactionary insurgency. Only those leftists poisoned by bourgeois-nationalist ideology could deny that such a social revolution, although imposed from without and bureaucratically deformed, would have an enormously liberating effect for the Afghan masses. Even the *New York Times* admits that Soviet Central Asians regard their country's military intervention in Afghanistan as support for the liberation of their backward, oppressed neighbors. (See "Soviet Central Asians Back Afghan Intervention," *Workers Vanguard* No. 254, 18 April.)

The difference between Soviet Central Asia and Afghanistan is to be measured not in decades but in centuries. While Afghanistan is over 90 percent illiterate, neighboring Soviet Uzbekistan probably has a higher literacy rate than Jimmy Carter's Georgia. The average life expectancy in Uzbekistan is 70 compared to 40 in Afghanistan. A major reason for this is that in Uzbekistan there is one doctor for every 380 people and in Afghanistan one doctor for every 20,000! All social and economic comparisons show the same thing.

Marx and Engels, following the French utopian socialist

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Tass

Above: Young women in Kabul liberated from the veil;
right: Traditional enslavement of women.



AP

Charles Fourier, maintained that "in any given society the degree of women's emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipation." The status of women in Soviet Central Asia is not only higher than in *any* Islamic bourgeois country (let alone Afghanistan), but in some areas (e.g., representation in the government) compares favorably even with the advanced bourgeois democracies. For example, 18 percent of all judges and 45 percent of all legislative members from the village level up in Uzbekistan are women.

To be sure, the workers and peasants of Soviet Central Asia suffer the same inequalities and bureaucratic oppression as their class brothers and sisters in Great Russia. There is some pressure for Russification in Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Khirgizia, etc. and, of course, the Moscow Stalinist regime denies all nationalities the democratic right of self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state. Should Afghanistan be transformed into a Soviet-satellite deformed workers state, it is possible a future revolutionary crisis could find the Afghan workers and peasants battling against a Soviet army under command of the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy. And in general proletarian political revolution within the Soviet bloc will be interwoven with the struggle for the right of national self-determination and other democratic rights and freedoms. But to raise the banner of "national self-determination" for Afghanistan today is to provide a democratic cover for imperialist-backed social counterrevolution of the most brutal, barbaric kind.

Revolution, Counterrevolution and National Self-Determination

"Russia has violated the national sovereignty of Afghanistan," scream the U.S. imperialists, the Peking Stalinists, the Eurocommunists. And this cry is duly echoed by the Mike Klonskys, Tony Cliffs and Tariq Alis. This charge doesn't even hold up on its own terms. Afghanistan is not a nation but a feudal-derived state

comprising a mosaic of nationalities, ethnic and tribal groupings. The Afghan monarchy was consolidated in the late nineteenth century over myriad unrelated peoples as a buffer state between tsarist Russia and British India. Much of the rural population has never lived under the effective control of any central state power, but identifies exclusively with particular ethnic, tribal or linguistic groups.

Imperialist trouble-shooters to the rightist insurgents lament that the Pashtoon, Hazara, Tadzhik, etc. guerrillas hate one another as much as they do the Soviet-backed Kabul radicals. Should the counterrevolutionary forces win, there would likely follow *another* civil war, this time fought along ethnic lines. In fact, if Soviet Central Asia is taken as a guide, the ethnic minorities of Afghanistan would enjoy more genuine national rights in a Soviet-bloc satellite than under a Pashtoon reactionary regime.

At a more fundamental political level, however, all this is beside the point. Even if Afghanistan were a homogeneous nation, revolutionary Marxists would support the Soviet Union's armed intervention. Both before and after the December coup, all talk of Afghan "national sovereignty" was but a cover for defending the class and caste privileges of the landlords, moneylenders and mullahs, privileges threatened by the Kabul petty-bourgeois radical government. For the imperialists, such slogans were mainly designed to bolster popular support for a renewed onslaught against Communist Russia. For revolutionary Marxists, the furthering of social revolution, including defense of the USSR against capitalist-imperialism, stands higher than the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination.

Seeking to justify their enthusiastic support to the Carter Doctrine, some Maoists, like Carl Davidson, have turned Lenin into a national-liberal, who supposedly opposed in principle military interventions to support revolutions in other countries. As against this Stalinist claptrap, even before the Bolshevik Revolution Lenin maintained that a victorious workers government was duty-bound not only

to agitate for proletarian revolution in capitalist countries, but, when necessary, to support it with force of arms:

"After expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise *against* the rest of the world—the capitalist world—attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states." [emphasis in original]

—“On the Slogan for a United States of Europe” (1915), *Collected Works* Vol. 21 (1964)

When a civil war is raging, a liberal attitude raising national self-determination to the ultimate principle can become downright criminal. Consider Hungary in 1919. In good part due to its own errors, the Soviet regime of Bela Kun alienated probably a majority of Hungary's peasantry and national minorities. The passive opposition of the petty-bourgeois masses to the Budapest-based workers government contributed to the victory of Admiral Horthy's white army, backed by the imperialists, and with it the extermination of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard.

During the four and a half months of Soviet Hungary's existence, the Russian Bolsheviks did everything in their power to link up with it militarily. In late April Lenin personally ordered the commanders of the Ukrainian Red Army: “The advance into part of Galicia and Bukovina is essential for contact with Soviet Hungary. This task must be achieved more quickly and surely” (*Collected Works*, Vol. 44). But the military campaign did not succeed, to the great misfortune of the socialist cause. In late July, just before the end, Lenin had to inform Bela Kun:

“We are aware of Hungary's grave and dangerous situation and are doing all we can. But speedy assistance is sometimes physically impossible. Try to hold out as long as you can.”

—*Ibid.*

Had the Ukrainian Red Army managed to save the Hungarian Soviet Republic, imperialist spokesmen and social-democrats throughout the world would have denounced “Soviet Russian imperialism” for trampling on the national independence of the Hungarian people. No doubt there would even have been analogies with tsarist Russia's occupation of Hungary during the revolutions of 1848.

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was not, like the Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, a proletarian dictatorship (the Afghan proletariat being minute). Nonetheless, the civil war in Afghanistan was a social struggle which pitted a modernizing intelligentsia against feudalist reaction. Here it is significant that a number of left groups (e.g., the soft Maoist *Guardian* and various Shachtmanite sectlets in the U.S.) supported the PDPA regime against the rightist rebels, but then condemned the Soviet intervention and demanded the Red Army withdraw. When a left-nationalist bourgeois government is fighting reaction, these self-styled “Marxists” can support it. But when there is actually a possibility that feudal-capitalist property relations will be overthrown, when the power of the mullahs can in fact be broken, when women can be liberated from the veil—then these petty-bourgeois radicals are against it. For these dregs of the pro-nationalist New Left and the wretched “Third Camp” social

democrats, counterrevolution from within is preferable to revolution from without!

The Bitter Fruits of New Leftism

A decade ago it was the first principle, almost a truism, for every young radical that U.S. imperialism was the truly monstrous main enemy of the world's peoples. Yet today the remnants of the New Left “anti-imperialists” of the 1960s, now largely one or another variety of Maoist, have reunited with American imperialism against “Soviet aggression.” How has this come about?

During the early/mid-’60s, when Washington was more hostile to Peking than to the Kremlin, a new generation of radicals arose critical and contemptuous of Khrushchev/Brezhnev in the name of Third World nationalism. But today over Afghanistan it is the American ruling class which invokes the rhetoric of national independence in attacking Soviet “hegemonism” and “superpowerism.”

The New Left considered “the Russian question,” i.e., the social character of the USSR, a scholastic topic of dispute among the irrelevant “old left.” To them the Cold War was dead, Russia had become part of the rich white man's world, a co-partner with the U.S. for conservatism on a world scale. The real struggle was now between the “Third World”—China, Vietnam, Cuba—and U.S. imperialism.

This outlook was captured by the U.S.'s most prominent New Left “theoretician,” Carl Oglesby, in his 1967 *Containment and Change*. Here the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions are presented simply as responses to foreign domination, having little if anything to do with capitalism versus communism. The Chinese Revolution “has nothing at all to do with communism, but rather with the independent organization of China and her acquisition of modern fire.” On Vietnam: “... one should be able to show somehow that the issue of the Vietnam war is not Western freedom versus Eastern slavery, but foreign versus local

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Feudalist insurgent kills radical schoolteacher near Iranian border.

DPA

control of Vietnam."

On U.S.-Soviet relations, Oglesby opined:

"With the Soviet Union, we have gone from confrontation to detente. The relationship is no longer defined by its anger and uncertainties.... Direct military confrontation is feared and avoided equally by both sides, crises are referred to hot lines instead of war rooms, and one sometimes wonders if there is not something still springier in the air: a slow convergence of political aims. The European Cold War no longer finds Russians and Americans peering at each other through gunights. Instead we have the experience of virtually integrated aid programs in Afghanistan [!] and India."

This political worldview, which equated the global roles of the U.S. and USSR, contained the rudiments of the "superpower" doctrine even before much of the New Left embraced Maoism and its doctrine of "Soviet social-imperialism."

Western Maoism arose from the grafting of New Leftism and Stalinism. A decisive shaping factor was the Vietnamese Revolution, in which a successful struggle against American imperialism was carried out under a traditional Stalinist leadership. To the impressionistic New Leftists, the "Third World" Stalinists seemed revolutionary as against the Soviets. From here it was only a short step to Mao's doctrine of rival superpowers.

The myriad Maoist sects have tended to come to terms with the Peking-Washington alliance which has developed ever since Nixon's trip to China in 1972, while the U.S. was raining bombs on Vietnam. In the face of such events as Chinese support to the CIA-engineered South African invasion of Angola in 1975-76, many Maoists pulled back, seeking to return to the good old days of "anti-imperialist unity." But in Angola it was war-by-proxy between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Now it is face-to-face over Afghanistan and there is no escaping. They must choose their camps.

With the rapid heating up of the Cold War and the open declaration of a Washington/Peking axis, the Maoists have come full circle. The events in Afghanistan only underscore that those who refuse to defend the Soviet Union against U.S. imperialism will inexorably be driven into the arms of the State Department and Pentagon. While Stalin suppressed proletarian revolution for an alliance with the "progressive" bourgeoisie, for Maoists the

popular front against "Soviet social-imperialism" can only be constructed as a bloc with the most vicious, anti-Communist sections of the imperialist ruling classes.

At the core of Stalinist doctrine is the program of "building socialism in one country." This is the ideology of a narrow, nationalist bureaucratic caste which rests on the foundations of a collectivized economy but stands opposed to the program of proletarian revolution. The attempt to counterpose China (or Albania) to Russia as the socialist fatherland has proved a dead end. The rapprochement of China with American imperialism has demonstrated that the Maos and Dengs, under the guise of building "socialism" in their country, are as willing to sell out the revolution as the Stalins and Brezhnevs. Moreover, the Peking Stalinists are today joined in a global counterrevolutionary alliance with the main imperialist power against the main anti-capitalist state power—the Soviet Union. Should U.S. imperialism overthrow the USSR (as the pro-Peking Maoists urge), this would also lead in short order to the destruction of People's China by the same imperialist power.

"Third Camp" Fever in the USec

The Afghanistan crisis has predictably thrown the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of Ernest Mandel into utter political disarray. At a late January USec meeting three lines were presented. The right-minority resolution advocated the pro-imperialist "Soviet troops out" line, asserting that a victory by Muslim reactionaries would be "much less harmful" than a prolonged Soviet presence. The left-minority position, ludicrously coming from the reformist American SWP, defended the Russian-backed Kabul regime while minimizing the Soviet intervention.

The Mandelite plurality tries to split the difference, playing both ends against the middle and saluting the golden mean. Its resolution (*Intercontinental Press*, 3 March) upbraids the Kremlin for not "considering any of the democratic and national sentiments of the oppressed classes and peoples" and for "introduc[ing] extreme confusion in the world proletariat"; it refuses to give the intervention "the least political support" and declares it is "opposed to the annexation of new territories by the

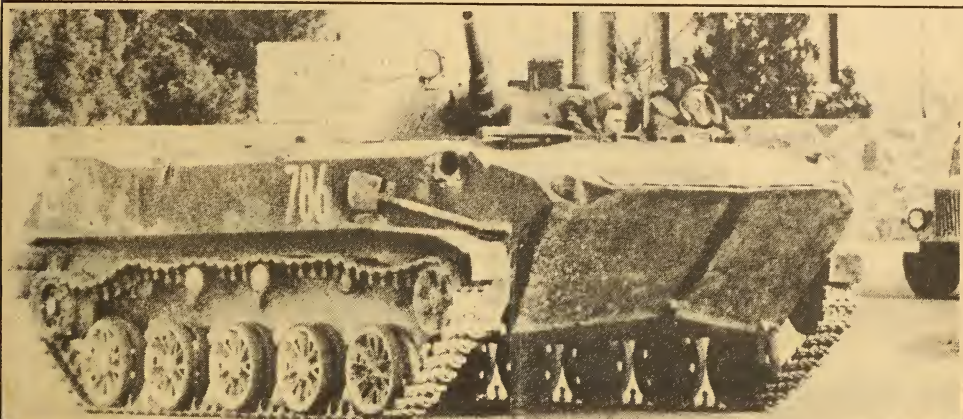
Trotsky on Revolution and Self-Determination

We do not only recognize, but we also give full support to the principle of self-determination, wherever it is directed against feudal, capitalist and imperialist states. But wherever the fiction of self-determination, in the hands of the bourgeoisie, becomes a weapon directed against the proletarian revolution, we have no occasion to treat this fiction differently from the other "principles" of democracy perverted by capitalism.

—Social Democracy and the Wars of Intervention in Russia 1918-1921

Against revolutionary "intervention" [the French syndicalist] Louzon quite inappropriately advances the old and uncontested principle: "The emancipation of the working class can be achieved only by the workers themselves." On a national scale? Only within the framework of a single country? Is it permissible for workers in one country to aid the strikers of another? Can they send arms to insurgents? Can they send their army, if they have one? Can they send it either to help the uprising or in order to prepare an uprising, just as strikers send squads to pull out workers in factories that have remained behind?

—"Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition," Writings (1929)



Soviet Red Army runs over Afghan Islamic reactionaries.

Lochon/Gamma

Kremlin"—even if a social revolution is carried out. But well practiced in the art of obfuscation, the Mandelites do not call for withdrawal of Soviet forces; and after more than 100 paragraphs of fulminating against the intervention, they drop in, out of the blue, four sentences of the most mealy-mouthed defensism.

There is now real trouble in Mandel's main European sections. Almost half, 20 to 22 of the central committee of the USec's badly tarnished "star" French section, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), has taken an outright pro-imperialist line. Arguing that Soviet intervention "mocks the right of peoples to self-determination," they call for "actions by the anti-imperialist and workers movement to press the Soviet Union to immediately withdraw its troops from Afghanistan" (*Rouge*, 22 February). What "actions" do they have in mind? Perhaps refusal by French dockers to load grain for the USSR?

If this large LCR minority has become "Carter Doctrine socialists," the majority are hardly red revolutionaries. They too condemn the Soviet action, but reject the call for immediate withdrawal as playing into the imperialists' hands.

The factional dissension in the once-leftist British section, the International Marxist Group (IMG), is even more deep-going. The original "Soviet Troops Out" article by Tariq Ali (*Socialist Challenge*, 3 January) produced a major furor. The IMG printed a number of letters raking Ali over the coals for "joining the imperialist chorus" and "dancing to the tune of the U.S. State Department." So a couple of weeks later the IMG changed its line without openly repudiating its earlier counterrevolutionary position. It still condemned the Soviet intervention but admitted that "in the present situation a call for the immediate withdrawal of troops would be tantamount to being in favour of the victory of the rightist forces" (*Socialist Challenge*, 17 January). No kidding!

Yet even this halfhearted "defense" of the Soviet forces provoked an outpouring of criticism from the right. Letters appeared in *Socialist Challenge* baiting the majority for wanting to form "welcoming committees for the Red

Army" and urging the IMG to "junk the old Trotskyism." Amid all this, *Socialist Challenge* (6 March) introduced a new column entitled "Thinking Aloud" for Tariq Ali to ventilate his "personal" (read, factional) views. He began his first column: "I remain unrepentant on Afghanistan."

Thus just a few months after this Potemkin Village "Fourth International" lost perhaps a third of its members in the split of the Latin American-centered Bolshevik

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International Spartacist Tendency Directory

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GPO Box 3473
Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia

Response to Afghanistan

Tony Cliff's "Third Campist" Socialist Workers Party (left). Tariq Ali's "Trotskyist" International Marxist Group (right).



Faction of political adventurer Nahuel Moreno, the USec is once again wracked by internal strife, this time concentrated in the Mandelite heartland. Mandel & Co. are trying to downplay the extent of the dissension over Afghanistan, but it is more potentially destructive than the Moreno split, a somewhat accidental development arising from the Argentine *caudillo's* overweening personal ambition. In the present case, it is the fruit of Mandel's own revisionism.

What we are now witnessing is the *open rebellion* by a significant section of the USec, long schooled in New Left anti-Sovietism and petty-bourgeois nationalism, against the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism. These USecers, cadres and ranks, are being drawn into the U.S.-led global counterrevolutionary alliance against the USSR through the medium of those tendencies with which they have long sought to regroup—East European "dissidents," the soft Maoists (e.g., the French Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs), the Eurocommunists (the circle around Jean Elleinstein) and various social-democratic groupings (the British Socialist Workers Party of Tony Cliff).

Tariq Ali: Anti-Soviet New Leftist

There is nothing accidental or episodic in Tariq Ali's role in this factional situation. He is the representative *par excellence* of New Left movementism and Third World nationalism within the USec. A former New Left celebrity, back in 1969 he edited an anthology, *The New Revolutionaries*, featuring such notables as Fidel Castro, Régis Debray, Ernest Mandel and, perhaps prophetically, Tony Cliff. His own contribution included among the "new revolutionaries" Mao and Ho but definitely excluded the stodgy Kremlin bureaucrats: "... Asian communism was to prove itself more human, more humane and more willing to admit its mistakes than its counterpart in the Soviet Union." Ah, music to Pol Pot's ears.

Ali also echoed the Maoist line that the Soviet Union exploits backward countries in its economic relations with them:

"...The Soviet Union and East European countries, in their trade relations with the exploited world, contribute toward maintaining the unequal exchange. The Soviet Union could easily pay more without harming its own economy."

In other words, wealth should be transferred from the workers and peasants of the USSR to the bourgeoisies of the "Third World"—to the Pahlavis, Nassers and Indira Gandhis.

If Ali responds to the Afghan crisis with the outlook of 1960s New Left Maoism, he uses some arguments borrowed from the ideological arsenal of Khrushchevite "peaceful coexistence" (a *tour de force* of Stalinist ecumenism). The USec minority resolution presumably submitted by Ali and his co-thinkers actually accuses Brezhnev & Co. of something like "left adventurism" in provoking imperialist militarism. It deplores that Soviet intervention allegedly fuels:

"The imperialists' justification for their resumption of the arms race, under the pretext that the Soviet Union is demonstrating in Afghanistan that it intends to use force to impose regimes loyal to it. The Afghanistan affair has already made a shambles of the efforts of the workers movement in the imperialist countries against the step-up of the nuclear arsenal in Europe and the West."

—"Draft Resolution on the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan," *Intercontinental Press*, 3 March

This is, of course, the very rationale by which Soviet Stalinism has for decades justified *not* supporting revolutions in other countries. "Peaceful coexistence" means precisely: don't "export" revolution; don't export arms to revolutions. Do nothing to upset the imperialists and weaken the "forces of peace" in the imperialist countries.

Mandel's Chickens Come Home to Roost

In the late 1960s the Mandelites invented the term "new mass vanguard" in order to identify themselves with the burgeoning New Left Maoist current against the pro-Moscow CPs. A 1969 USec majority resolution in praise of Maoism states:

"...the sharp campaign which Peking unleashed against the right-wing opportunist line of the CPs following Moscow's lead...has objectively contributed to deepen the world crisis of Stalinism and to facilitate the upsurge of a new youth vanguard the world over. Inside that youth vanguard the general sympathy for China and Maoist criticism of the Kremlin's revisionism remains deep..."

—"Original Draft Resolution on the 'Cultural Revolution' and Proposed Amendments—Arranged in Two Columns," [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, June 1970

When this drivel was written, Peking's criticism of Soviet "revisionism" had become its main ideological basis for declaring the USSR was a "social-imperialist, capitalist" country. In the immortal words of the Chairman himself: "The rise to power of revisionism means the rise to power of the bourgeoisie." By 1969 the Mao regime was *already* likening the USSR to Nazi Germany, an overture for a deal with the "democratic" imperialist countries. In his memoirs Henry Kissinger indicates that Peking's denunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine as "a fascist theory" was one of the first signs which convinced him a rapprochement with Mao's China was possible.

For over a decade the European USec has chased after precisely those elements within the Stalinist milieu which have broken with Moscow in favor of competing nationalisms—for the Maoists, it was the Chinese and lately the Albanian bureaucracies; for the Eurocommunists, their own imperialist bourgeoisies. Mandel has taught his followers that among Stalinists antipathy to the Soviet leadership is the main criterion for healthy political motion. Afghanistan shows many have taken this lesson to heart.

Never given to "sectarian" narrowness, the USec generously included in the "new mass vanguard" various left social-democratic groupings, such as the French Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU), a habitat for renegades from Trotskyism like Michel Pablo and Yves Craipeau. Proposing unity to the PSU a few years ago, Mandel assured its leaders that Trotskyism and the Fourth International were mere "labels" to be negotiated away if the organizational price was right.

In Britain for years the main political bedfellow of the IMG has been the "state-cap" Socialist Workers Party of Tony Cliff, who broke from Trotskyism in 1950, refusing to

support the Soviet bloc in the Korean War. Right now when the Cliffite SWP is denouncing the Soviet action in Afghanistan as "imperialist," the IMG is holding joint meetings with these anti-Communist renegades. And at a mid-February IMG national conference, the "majority" (a bare 50 percent) voted to "launch a public campaign to unite the forces of the IMG with those of the SWP." Even the main opposition wanted to follow this liquidationist course, only desiring to hold out for better terms (see "IMG Lurches Toward Cliff," *Spartacist/Britain*, March 1980).

Pandering to the left social-democratic/Eurocommunist milieu, the USec has for years uncritically enthused over pro-Western Soviet-bloc dissidents. In light of Carter's present moves, we recall that in early 1979 the USec-sponsored *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* reprinted *without comment* a call by a group of Soviet émigrés for a total economic, technical and cultural boycott of the USSR. Circulating this reactionary, anti-Communist propaganda caused Tamara Deutscher to withdraw as sponsor of the journal (see box). So when the USec majority now claims to oppose Carter's boycott of the Moscow Olympics and "the imperialist sanctions," this declaration is less than convincing.

Afghanistan Explodes Mandel's Détente

How does Mandel square his professed Trotskyism with a regroupment orientation toward those who refuse to defend the Soviet Union? Simply by proclaiming that defense of the USSR against imperialism is irrelevant in this happy age of détente. Mandel's conception of détente is actually a version of the old 1960s Maoist "superpower" condominium doctrine. He denies that U.S. imperialism

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Tamara Deutscher Resigns as Sponsor of USec-Backed Journal

Dear Editor,

You have published, in the *Labour Focus* of January-February 1979, a letter which contains an appeal to Western Socialists and Communists. Your introduction stresses the weight of the signatories as a 'very authoritative group of Soviet socialists and civil rights campaigners', and you obviously attach great significance to their statement which poses 'very sharply...very important questions for socialists' and 'warrants serious thought'. And yet there is in the whole issue no editorial comment in which you distance yourself from, or in any way show disagreement with, the views expressed by the signatories while your Introduction suggests that your editorial board adopts at best a neutral attitude towards the appeal.

Labour Focus is, as you say in the *Statement of Aims*, not a journal of 'debate' but of 'information' and, in my view, should not lend its pages to discussions, especially of a kind which start from premises removed from socialist principles. Most of the signatories of the Appeal can hardly be described as socialists; and most can find

ample space to express their views in bourgeois and right-wing papers.

The Appeal calls for nothing less than a wholesale boycott of the USSR and a complete break of all relations between West and East—in other words, for isolating the Soviet Union and putting it into quarantine. Such methods would in no way help the process of democratisation in the East. On the contrary, they would only strengthen all reactionary forces in both camps. The not so distant past has taught us that Stalinism was at its worst in the period of the Soviet Union's isolation.

I have been watching with increasing unease your treatment of some of the problems of dissent in the East. The appearance of the Letter, without any critical comment of its content, led me to the decision to withdraw my sponsorship of the paper, and it is with real regret that I feel I have to ask you to delete my name from the list of sponsors.

With all personal good wishes,
Yours fraternally,
Tamara Deutscher.

—*Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, March-April 1979

remains fundamentally hostile to the Soviet degenerated workers state. Rather he defines the relationship as of one jointly suppressing the revolutionary forces throughout the world. Mandel claims that Brezhnev's Russia functions essentially as world capitalism's gendarme, a position in substance (if not in form) identical to that of the New Leftish Maoists and "Third Campists" like Cliff.

Mandel has derided the Spartacist tendency as fixated on Soviet defensism for our contention that Washington has abandoned its post-Vietnam policy of détente and returned to the Cold War path (ideologically expressed in Carter's "Human Rights" campaign). After the Sino-Vietnam war in February 1979, he reasserted: "... nothing has changed in the *basic* aspect of the world situation, which is the consistent pursuing of mutual peaceful coexistence and collaboration by Moscow and Washington on a world scale" ("Behind Differences on Military Conflicts in Southeast Asia," *Intercontinental Press*, 9 April 1979). Never mind that Washington rather openly colluded with the Chinese invasion of a Soviet ally. Never mind that the day that the Chinese army crossed the Vietnamese border, the State Department warned the Soviets against retaliating in kind. For Mandel, it's détente über alles.

His latest book, *Revolutionary Marxism Today*, published a few months before the Afghanistan crisis, actually prophesies:

"... I would deny that we are entering a new cold war situation in which imperialism, more or less allied to Peking, is preparing an aggressive drive against the Soviet Union..."

"The basic trend in the current world situation, I would argue, is not toward a new, full-fledged cold war between Moscow and Washington, but a continuation of 'peaceful coexistence' that has been pursued for several decades [?!] now."

One can imagine that as the Trident missiles rise out of the North Sea headed toward their Moscow target they pass over the University of Louvain where a certain professor of Marxism is lecturing that détente is alive and well and is the main axis of world politics.

Remember how, when Michel Pablo wanted to tail after

the Kremlin in the 1950s, he invented a theory of "centuries of deformed workers states." Mandel's present equivalent—aimed at cozying up to anti-Soviet dissidents, Eurocommunists and Jimmy Carter—is "decades of peaceful coexistence."

Marx was fond of the British empiricist saying: facts are stubborn things. In Afghanistan today the defense of the USSR is posed with a directness and immediacy that not even a centrist charlatan like Mandel can dodge. Everyone knows that to call for Soviet withdrawal is to call for the establishment of a fanatically anti-Communist government on the southern border of the USSR. But for the USec to militarily support the Soviet army in Afghanistan would draw the line against almost every organization, tendency and individual it has sought to regroup with for the past five or even ten years.

After years of sweeping the Russian question under the rug, the USec is now reaping the reward in the form of a massive anti-Soviet bulge in the face of American imperialism's warmongering over Afghanistan. Whether the USec's deeply ingrained cynicism toward program can stave off sharp and even factional polarization over the central questions of revolutionary orientation in a period of heightened bourgeois anti-Sovietism remains to be seen. Is there anything left of the primitive leftist energies which once characterized the young USec cadres who built barricades in the Paris streets in May '68 and carried Vietcong flags in the radical "mobilizations" over Vietnam? Or have "the children of '68" grown up through the years of tailing popular frontism into ordinary anti-Soviet social democrats?

This much is clear: the consistent Trotskyist program of the international Spartacist tendency, centering for the backward countries on the struggle for the permanent revolution—the fight for liberation under the leadership not of the "anti-imperialist bourgeoisie" but of the revolutionary proletariat—is the only road forward.

For unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states through socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies! Extend the gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples! ■



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"Export of Revolution"...

(continued from page 9)

Versailles would come crashing down, and the floodgates of revolution would burst open in Germany, spreading over the entire continent. The very prospect made for an almost overwhelming argument. To a certain extent Lenin and the Politburo majority were willing to subordinate the degree of indigenous support for the sovietization of Poland to the goal of securing a common border with Germany, then in the throes of a revolutionary situation. And certainly with the Red Army on Germany's border in the period 1920-23, the entire course of modern history could have been radically altered.

Lenin's most complete statement of the international significance of the Polish war was given in a speech to a congress of leather industry workers on 2 October 1920:

"The Versailles Peace has turned Poland into a buffer state which is to guard against German contact with Soviet communism and is regarded by the Entente as a weapon against the Bolsheviks....

"Had Poland turned Soviet, had the Warsaw workers received from Soviet Russia help they awaited and welcomed, the Peace of Versailles would have been smashed, and the entire international system set up as a result of the victory over Germany would have collapsed. France would then not have had a buffer protecting Germany against Soviet Russia."

—*Collected Works*, Vol. 31 (1966)

Ironically, in comparison with the differences over the Brest-Litovsk peace in 1918, Lenin and Trotsky now switched roles. At that time it was Lenin who had most adamantly pressed for concluding the "shameful peace" in order to secure a respite for the newly formed Soviet state. Trotsky, in advocating his "not war, not peace" position, banked on a more or less imminent revolution in Germany.

Whereas events proved Lenin right in 1918, the course of the Russo-Polish war did not bear out his optimistic projections. The Polish peasants, whipped up by the Catholic clergy, resented the advancing Reds as conquerors and not liberators. The memories of a century and a half of national and religious oppression were still fresh in the mind of the Polish rural majority. And the Red Army's forced grain requisitions, coupled with some incidents of vengeance against individuals by raw Russian soldiers, didn't help win the mistrustful Poles to the Communist cause.

Nor was the Soviet Russian advance welcomed in general by the urban proletariat, which in its majority was still under social-democratic leadership. The Polish Communist Party, which had been forced underground more than a year before, issued a call for a general strike, but it found no response except among the militant miners in the extreme southwestern industrial region of Dabrowa. In Warsaw some workers even volunteered to serve in Pilsudski's militias. After the Russians' defeat at the historic battle of the Vistula, Lenin admitted that the offensive provoked not class war within Poland but national unity.

Stalin's Treachery in 1920

One of the lesser known aspects of the Russo-Polish war was the treacherous role played by Stalin. Stalin was the



Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky commanded main Red armies in Polish war, later advocated "revolution from without."

senior commissar in charge of the southern armies led by A. Yegorov and S.M. Budienny. According to the plan of attack, the western armies under Mikhail Tukhachevsky would march directly on Warsaw, while the southern armies under Stalin would first take Kiev and then turn north to intersect Tukhachevsky outside Warsaw. One of the reasons that the defeat of the Soviet armies at the battle of the Vistula assumed such catastrophic proportions was Stalin's conscious insubordination in refusing to link up with Tukhachevsky in time.

When it seemed that Tukhachevsky's capture of Warsaw was only days away, Stalin decided to get his own "prize" rather than simply bring up the rear of Tukhachevsky's triumphant entry into Warsaw. When the moment came for the southern forces to turn north, Stalin instead persuaded Budienny and Yegorov to continue west and take Lvov, a Polish city of secondary importance. Thus, instead of the two armies converging, a huge gap was opened between them, leaving Tukhachevsky's flank entirely exposed.

Into this gap sprang Pilsudski. Later he described how incomprehensible the actions of Yegorov/Budienny were to him:

"Their correct line of march was the one which would have brought them nearer to the Russian main armies commanded by Tuchachevsky, and this would also have threatened the greatest danger to us. Everything seemed black and hopeless to me, the only bright spots on the horizon being the failure of Budyonny's cavalry to attack my rear and the weakness displayed by the 12th Red Army [of Yegorov]."

—quoted in Erich Wollenberg, *The Red Army* (1938)

When the danger to Tukhachevsky's flank became apparent, the Soviet Supreme Command repeatedly wired
continued on next page

urgent messages backed up by threats instructing Stalin to proceed as planned. Stalin simply ignored these orders, and Budienny and Yegorov wasted precious days and men fruitlessly trying to take Lvov. Finally after more threats from Moscow, Stalin dispatched Budienny's cavalry to the north, but by then it was too late. Pilsudski launched a counteroffensive that hit at Tukhachevsky's unguarded flank and snatched Polish victory from the jaws of defeat. It should be pointed out that imperialist France provided Pilsudski with massive military support, including officers for his army.

It remains unclear whether Tukhachevsky could have taken Warsaw if Stalin had carried out his orders. In the aftermath, Tukhachevsky claimed he could have, accusing Stalin of treachery. Trotsky maintained that Stalin's insubordination was a great, but not decisive, factor in the defeat. But what is clear is that had Stalin not been insubordinate, then the magnitude of the defeat would surely have been less. The Red armies might not have been thrown back so far, and the Soviet government might have been able to conclude peace on far more favorable terms. Thus, Stalin in his own way helped strengthen those forces—the isolation of the USSR and its hostile encirclement—which were to bring about a Thermidorian reaction with him as its bonapartist head.

"Revolution from Without"

Although Lenin recognized the necessity of concluding a peace with Pilsudski after the defeat on the Vistula, other Bolshevik leaders, notably Zinoviev, head of the Comintern, minimized the magnitude of the defeat and talked about waging a second Polish war. Not surprisingly, this mood to "continue the offensive" was expressed even more strongly in the command of the Red Army. Tukhachevsky, the brilliant general who at age 26 had led the main Soviet armies in the Polish war, vowed to hold his victory march in the streets of Warsaw. He argued that a Soviet victory over Pilsudski was possible *without* an indigenous proletarian revolution in Poland.

This idea had an appeal for many other Red Army commanders. In his book *From Dvina to Vistula*, E.N. Sergeyev, who commanded one of the armies in the march on Warsaw, openly stated that many Red Army commanders had never really thought the Soviet invasion would be met by a Communist-led revolution of the Polish working class:

"The occupants in the political chanceries a long way from the front were the only people who seriously believed in the possibility of a Polish Revolution. We in the army had little faith in it...."

—quoted in Erich Wollenberg, *The Red Army*

The "political chanceries" to which Sergeyev not too subtly referred were, of course, the offices of the Bolshevik Politburo and Comintern.

It was after the defeat on the Vistula that Tukhachevsky began to promote, quite unabashedly, the idea of imposing in capitalist Europe a "revolution from without." He set forth his views in lectures given at the military academy beginning in 1921, and these were later published in abbreviated form as a book, *The Campaign Behind the Vistula*. Here Tukhachevsky was so explicit about "revolution from without" that Pilsudski himself reprinted it as an appendix to his own work, *The Year 1920*.

Where Tukhachevsky parted ways with the Bolshevik

leaders was in inverting the relationship between the indigenous revolution and foreign military aid. The Bolsheviks had always regarded the Red Army as an auxiliary of the revolutionary movements abroad. In his lectures Tukhachevsky referred to the Red Army itself as a "socialist movement." And the key task of the Polish (or any other) revolution—the destruction of the bourgeois armed forces—was assigned to the Red Army:

"There is no doubt that the revolution of the Polish workers would have become a reality if we had succeeded in depriving the Polish bourgeoisie of its bourgeois army. The conflagration caused by such a revolution would not have stopped at the Polish frontiers; it would have spread all over Europe like the waters of a wild mountain torrent. 'The Red Army will never forget this experience of 'revolution from without.' If Europe's bourgeoisie challenges us to another war, the Red Army will succeed in destroying it. In such a case the Red Army will support and spread the revolution in Europe.' [our translation]

—reprinted as "The March Beyond the Vistula" in J. Pilsudski, *L'Année 1920* (1929)

Here Tukhachevsky stands closer to Napoleon than to Lenin and Trotsky. He explicitly drew an analogy with the revolutionary wars of Napoleonic France. Just give him a chance, and the Russian Red Army will carry the proletarian revolution to the West to the tune of the "Internationale," just as Napoleon's armies carried the bourgeois revolution eastward across Europe to the strains of the "Marseillaise."

As head of the Red Army Trotsky in particular polemicized against Tukhachevsky's doctrine. In this Trotsky was acting as spokesman for the Bolshevik leadership. He gave his most general reply in a December 1921 article entitled, "A Military Doctrine or Pseudo-Military Doctrinairism?"

"Of course, not for a minute do we intend to conceal from the workers, including the Red Army, that on principle we are always for an offensive-revolutionary war in those circumstances when it could aid the liberation of workers in other countries. But to think that on the basis of this principled declaration one can create an effective ideology or 'educate' the Red Army in the present circumstances to understand neither the Red Army nor the present circumstances...."

"In the monumental class struggle which is today on the rise, the role of military intervention from without must have only an attendant, assisting, auxiliary function. Military intervention can speed up the denouement and facilitate victory. But for this it is necessary that the revolution mature not only in a social sense—that already exists—but also in terms of political consciousness. Military intervention is like an obstetrician's forceps: used opportunely, it can ease the birth pangs; set into motion prematurely, it can only produce a miscarriage." [our translation]

—*How the Revolution Was Armed* (1923)

Trotsky further argued that, given the backwardness of Russia compared to bourgeois Europe, Tukhachevsky's doctrine of ever "on the attack!" was a "strategy of adventurism."

A Revolutionary War in 1923?

Tukhachevsky returned to the subject of "revolution from without" in 1923. It was placed on the agenda when the French occupation of the Ruhr precipitated another revolutionary crisis in Germany. The question of questions among European ruling circles was whether Soviet Russia would again invade Poland, either in response to a Polish attack on revolutionary Germany or in anticipation of one.

Indeed, the Soviet government made it clear that any attack by Poland on Germany would be considered as an attack on vital Soviet interests. A lead article in the *Izvestia* of 29 September 1923 declared that "we have never renounced our idea of furthering by all means the development of the international revolution" [our emphasis] (quoted in L. Kochan, *Russia and the Weimar Republic* [1954]).

However, the main aim of Soviet policy at that time was to try to avoid war with Poland if at all possible. There were two sound reasons for doing so. First, it was doubtful that the Russian peasants, enjoying the respite of the market-oriented New Economic Policy, could be mobilized for another major war simply through political exhortation. And second, another Russo-Polish war, no matter which side initiated it, would almost certainly provoke French intervention at least, and the Bolsheviks didn't want the impending German revolution engulfed in war.

To the Red Army commanders like Tukhachevsky who had a score to settle with Pilsudski, Trotsky argued that in its present circumstances the most effective weapon Russia had was not soldiers but grain. Germany was starving for the bread Russia could supply. In turn, the Russian peasants were clamoring for manufactured goods, which a proletarian Germany could supply. In a speech to Red Army military commanders in October 1923, Trotsky stressed:

"We must ensure that the link between our fundamental interests and those of the working people of Germany becomes clear and tangible to every Red Army soldier." [our translation]

—*How the Revolution Was Armed*

If Poland permitted the Soviet government to transport grain across its territory to Germany and return with manufactured goods, the beginnings of a Russo-German economic federation would be established. Poland soon would find itself caught as if in a vise; the Polish proletariat would probably be able to come to power without foreign military assistance. And if Pilsudski refused to negotiate such a trade agreement, or terminated one as soon as its implications became apparent, the Russian peasants would then more clearly grasp the vital economic stake they had in fighting another war with Poland. These strategic

calculations, however, turned out to be moot as the German revolution was lost when the Communist Party let slip the decisive moment for action.

In summary the interaction between indigenous proletarian revolution and military intervention by a workers state is a highly complicated question, containing as it does a potential conflict between the strategic interests of the world socialist revolution and the democratic right of national self-determination. There is no simple formula which covers any and every historical situation. The Bolsheviks rejected both revolutionary military bonapartism à la Tukhachevsky and social-democratic obeisance before national sovereignty. This latter nationalist-opportunist policy was adopted by Stalin in the 1930s in the form of "peaceful coexistence" and pledges of "non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries."

Perhaps the best encapsulation of the Bolshevik position was given by Trotsky in 1921 after the Soviet conquest of Menshevik-ruled Georgia set international social democracy howling about "Red imperialism":

"A workers' state, in recognizing the right of self-determination, thereby recognizes that revolutionary coercion is not an all-powerful historical factor. Soviet Russia does not by any means intend to make its military power take the place of the revolutionary efforts of the proletariats of other countries. The conquest of proletarian power must be an outcome of proletarian political experience. This does not mean that the revolutionary efforts of the workers of Georgia or any other country, must not receive any military support from outside. It is only essential that this support should come at a moment when the need for it has been created by the political development of the workers, and recognised by the class-conscious revolutionary vanguard, who have won the sympathy of the majority of the workers. These are questions of revolutionary strategy, and not a formal democratic ritual."

—*Social Democracy and the Wars of Intervention in Russia 1918-1921*

But in distinction to every variety of pro-Russian or pro-Chinese Stalinist, we recognize that the Red Army of Lenin and Trotsky is separated from the Red Army of Brezhnev by a bureaucratic counterrevolution under Stalin. Only a proletarian political revolution in the USSR can truly restore the Red Army and the Soviet state to their internationalist and revolutionary mission. ■

1,200 Stop Nazis...

(continued from page 32)

need for a workers party based on the unions.

Timid reformists call on these same city rulers to ban the Klan, but the racist Hitler-lovers were stopped by tenacious struggle against the capitalist politicians. The bourgeoisie will someday resort to the armed shock troops of race terror, union-busting and anti-communism in a desperate attempt to preserve its rule over the working class—the one force with the power and unified interest to smash the capitalist onslaught of depression and war. That is why the government *cannot* "ban the Klan."

As Carter whips up chauvinism in his mad drive toward imperialist war, as the economy goes to hell, the ultra-right grows bolder. Even as ANCAN rallied, four black women were wounded in Chattanooga as KKKers blasted

shotguns into a group of blacks. The KKK/Nazis are the fascist fringe of the White House's perspective for a popular mobilization for thermonuclear World War III against the Soviet Union. With Carter on the warpath against Communism overseas, the KKK/Nazis feel it's open season on leftists, blacks, labor and Jews here. In working to interdict the fascists from carrying their terror into the major industrial centers, we are therefore also seeking to deprive the bourgeoisie of a rabid constituency screaming for war on the USSR.

As Spartacist League spokesman Al Nelson said at the April 19 rally:

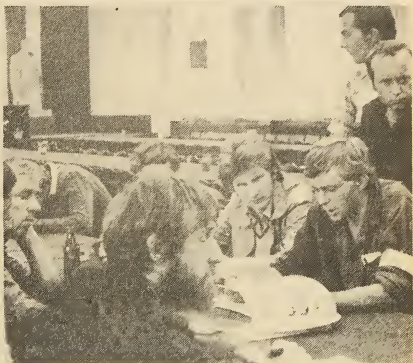
"We need a workers party to get rid of the bosses, their courts, their cops, their armed thugs, their fascists—to get rid of them once and for all, to establish a workers society, a socialist society, a workers government."

ANCAN ran the Nazis out of San Francisco—let's keep them on the run! ■



A Workers Poland Yes! The Pope's Poland No!

SEE PAGE 2



Mosander



AP

Polish Social Democrats
Arm in Arm with Clerical
Reaction

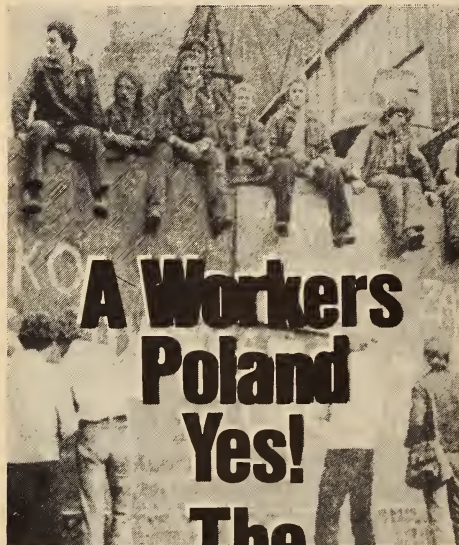
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Revisionists on the
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A Workers Poland Yes! The Pope's Poland No!

Everyone predicted it was coming. A restive, combative working class, peasant strikes, massive foreign debt, chronic and widespread food shortages, a powerful and increasingly assertive Catholic church, the burgeoning of social-democratic and clerical-nationalist oppositional groupings. All the elements were there. Poland in the late '70s was locked in a deepening crisis heading toward explosion, *an explosion which could bring either proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy or capitalist counterrevolution led by Pope Wojtyla's church.*

And when it came it gripped world attention for two solid weeks. The Baltic coast general strike was the most powerful mobilization of the power of the working class since France May 1968. But was it a mobilization for the working class? That is the decisive question.

There is now a settlement *on paper*. The bureaucracy has agreed to allow "new, self-governing trade unions" with the pledge that these recognize "the leading role" of the Communist party and do not engage in political activities. Insofar as the settlement enhances the Polish workers' power to struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy, revolutionaries can support the strike and its outcome. But only a blind man could fail to see the gross influence of the Catholic church and also pro-Western sentiments among the striking workers. If the settlement strengthens the

working class organizationally, it also strengthens the forces of reaction.

The Gdansk settlement *cannot last*. No Stalinist bureaucracy—a parasitic caste which must *monopolize* political power to preserve itself—can tolerate independent working-class opposition. And in Poland today the notion of such unions "staying out of politics" is plain ridiculous. The situation in Poland is one of cold dual power. On top of this, further clashes must come as the regime, massively in debt to Western financial institutions, cannot concede the enormous "free lunch" the workers are demanding. The big money wage increases will either fuel runaway inflation or even more severe shortages. Furthermore, the Kremlin has made disapproving noises about the settlement, and Soviet military intervention cannot be ruled out. The end of the Baltic general strike was only the beginning of the crisis of Stalinist Poland.

Workers Democracy or Clerical-Nationalist Reaction?

Certainly the workers are reacting against bureaucratic mismanagement, privilege and abuse. The Polish workers' grievances are real and they are just. The firing of an old militant, Anna Walentynowicz, a few months before her retirement, which reportedly sparked the Lenin Shipyard takeover in Gdansk, should infuriate every honest worker. The existence of special shops exclusive to party members and cops is an abomination, a rejection of the most basic principles of socialism.

What of the workers' positive allegiances and general political outlook? Early in the strike there were reports of singing the Internationale, which indicates some element of socialist consciousness. But while the imperialist media always plays up any support for anti-communist ideology in the Soviet bloc, there is no question that to a great degree the Baltic workers and their principal leaders identify with the powerful Catholic church opposition. It is not just the external signs—the daily singing of the national hymn, "Oh God, Who Has Defended Poland," the hundreds of strikers kneeling for mass, the ubiquitous pictures of Wojtyla-John Paul II, Lech Walesa tossing out pictures of the Virgin Mary. The outside advisers to the strike committee consisted of prominent figures in the Catholic ZNAK group and these continue to advise the "new, self-governing unions."

Even more ominous was the strike committee's demand for "access by all religious groups [read Catholic church] to the mass media." This is an *anti-democratic* demand which would legitimize the church in its present role as the recognized opposition to the Stalinist regime. In effect the Baltic shipbuilders are asking for a state church in a deformed workers state.

But that church is not loyal to the workers state. Far from it! The Polish Catholic church (virulently anti-Semitic) has been a bastion of reaction even within the framework of world Catholicism. Especially since 1976 the Polish church has become increasingly open and assertive in its anti-Communism. Early last year the *Wall Street Journal* (2 January 1979) observed: "Thus, the priesthood has become in effect an opposition party."

This article also pointed out that the cardinal of Krakow was especially responsible for the greater oppositional stance of the church. A few months earlier this Polish



Sygma

Lech Walesa is "a committed Catholic and nationalist" who "has not the least in common with communism," according to liberal West German Der Spiegel.

prelate had become the first non-Italian successor to the throne of St. Peter in four centuries. Karol Wojtyla is a dangerous reactionary working hand in glove with U.S. imperialism (especially his fellow countryman Zbigniew Brzezinski) to roll back "atheistic Communism," beginning in his homeland. As we wrote when this Polish anti-Communist was made pope: "... he now stands at the head of many millions of practicing Catholics in East Europe, a tremendous force for counterrevolution" ("The President's Pope?" *WV* No. 217, 30 October 1978).

The Polish episcopate, fearing both Russian military intervention and its inability to control a workers' uprising, took a cautious tack during the Baltic general strike. But whatever the hierarchy's present tactical calculations, in a power vacuum the church, well-organized with a mass base, will be a potent agency for social counterrevolution.

Poland presents the most combative working class in the Soviet bloc, with a history of struggling for independent organizations going back to the mid-1950s. It is also the one country in Eastern Europe with a mass, potentially counterrevolutionary mobilization around the Catholic church. Thus, unlike Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968, the alternatives in the present Polish crisis are not limited to proletarian political revolution or Stalinist reestablishment. At the same time, it is not Afghanistan where the Soviet Red Army is playing a progressive role in crushing an imperialist-backed, clerical-reactionary uprising. In a sense Poland stands somewhere between Hungary in 1956 and Afghanistan.

Trotskyism and "Free Trade Unions"

The Baltic strike committee's main demand and gain was "free trade unions." This particular slogan, pushed for years by the CIA-backed Radio Free Europe, has acquired a definite anti-Communist and pro-Western connotation. Remember the 1921 Kronstadt mutiny's call for "free soviets"—free from Communists, that is.

An integral part of the Trotskyist program for proletarian political revolution in the degenerated/

deformed workers states is the struggle for trade unions independent of bureaucratic control. Trade unions and the right to strike would be necessary even in a democratically governed workers state to guard against abuses and mistakes by administrators and managers. But it is far from clear that the "free trade unions" long envisioned by the dissidents would be free from the influence of pro-Catholic, pro-NATO elements who represent a mortal danger to the working class.

In any case, in the highly politicized situation in Poland today the "new, self-governing" trade unions cannot and will not limit themselves to questions of wage rates, working conditions, job security, etc. They will either be drawn into the powerful orbit of the Catholic church or have to oppose it in the name of socialist principle.

And in determining that outcome the presence of a revolutionary vanguard party would be critical. A central task for a Trotskyist organization in Poland would be to raise in these unions a series of demands that will *split* the clerical-nationalist forces from among the workers and separate them out. These unions must defend the socialized means of production and proletarian state power against Western imperialism. In Poland today the elementary democratic demand of the separation of church and state is a dividing line between the struggle for workers democracy and the deadly threat of capitalist restoration.

The nucleus of a Leninist-Trotskyist opposition in Poland would have nothing to do with the present dissident groups. It would denounce the social-democratic Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) for helping tie the workers to imperialism, the pope and Pilsudskiite anti-Soviet nationalists. But among the rebellious workers there must be elements that are fed up with the bureaucracy and look back to the traditions of Polish Marxism, while having no truck with bogus "democracy" in priests' cassocks. It is among this layer above all that revolutionaries must struggle to win the cadres to build a genuinely communist proletarian party, capable of opening the road

continued on next page

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Poles greet Red Army soldiers in 1945. Stalinist Russia carried out a bureaucratically-deformed revolution.

to socialism by ousting the bureaucratic caste which falsely rules in the workers' name.

Break the Imperialist Economic Stranglehold!

The abandonment of agricultural collectivization in 1956 has played no small role in contributing to Poland's present economic and political crisis. It has saddled the country with a backward, smallholding rural economy grossly inefficient even by East European standards. And the strength of the Polish church is based on the social weight of the rural petty bourgeoisie. Today over a third of the labor force still toils in the fields, while 80 percent of farmland is privately owned. Only by eliminating their hideous poverty and rural isolation can the hold of religious obscurantism on the masses be broken. An immediate, key task for a revolutionary workers govern-

ment in Poland is to promote the collectivization of agriculture.

Responding to the violent strikes/protests over food price increases in 1970-71, the new Gierek regime promised huge wage increases for the workers, higher procurement prices and state pensions for the peasants plus the rapid modernization of Polish industry. This "economic miracle" (a term actually used in official propaganda) was to be achieved through massive loans from the West and also the Soviet Union.

In an immediate sense this economic maneuver, aimed at transforming Poland into something like an East European Japan, was derailed by the 1974-75 world depression which sharply contracted the country's export markets. At a deeper level, Gierek's economic gamble failed because the Stalinist regime is incapable of mobilizing the enthusiasm and sense of sacrifice of the Polish working people. This

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Der Spiegel

Edward Gierek (left) placed Poland deeply in debt to Helmut Schmidt's (right) West Germany attempting to buy off a combative working class.

incompetence is endemic in a bureaucracy, more due to a lack of an effective feedback than to material privilege.

In 1978 over 50 percent of Poland's hard currency earnings were absorbed by debt service, in 1979 over 80 percent and today over 90 percent. Poland has avoided becoming the world's biggest bankrupt only by agreeing to austerity programs imposed by its imperialist creditors. At the same time, the Russian leadership, fearing a popular explosion if the Polish masses are pushed too hard, is paying a good part of Warsaw's foreign debt. In one sense Poland has become the intermediary through which Western finance capital sucks surplus out of the Soviet workers and peasants (whose living standards are substantially lower than those of the Poles).

While the Polish Stalinist regime's economic mismanagement is today glaring, the *historical superiority* of collectivized property and centralized planning, even when saddled with a parasitic bureaucracy, remains indisputable. Between 1950 and 1976 the advanced capitalist economies grew at an average annual rate of 4.4 percent, the backward capitalist economies at 5 percent and the centrally planned East European economies 7.7 percent (*Scientific American*, September 1980).

The Polish workers must not pay for the gross mismanagement of the Gierek regime nor should they have any confidence in the bureaucracy's "economic reforms." Egalitarian and rational economic planning is possible only under a government based on democratically-elected workers councils (soviets). As a revolutionary, transitional step toward that, Polish workers must struggle against the bureaucracy for control over production, prices, distribution and foreign trade.

A revolutionary workers government in Poland would *cancel the foreign debt*. Well, it might export comrade Edward Gierek to West Germany where he can work off his

obligations in a Ruhr coal mine. A very good idea, some Polish worker might say, but will the bankers of Frankfurt write off \$20 billion with a shrug? What of imperialist retaliation, economic or military? To this inevitable reaction the Polish proletariat must appeal to the workers of West Europe: We do not want to be the clients of your masters but your comrades in a new venture—international socialist planning in a Socialist United States of Europe!

For the Revolutionary Unity of the Polish and Russian Workers!

All organized forces in Polish political life—the Stalinist bureaucracy, the church and all wings of the dissident movement—each in their own way inculcate hostility to Russia as *the enemy* of the Polish people. A hallmark for a revolutionary party in Poland is a positive orientation to the Russian working class. And this is not simply a question of abstract internationalism, it is a matter of life and death.

Illusions about the good will of the Western capitalist powers common in East Europe do not extend to the Soviet Union. Having lost 20 million fighting Nazi Germany, the Soviet people understand that NATO's nuclear arsenal is targeted at them. The Soviet masses also know that the imperialist powers' war against their country, hot and cold, began with the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917.

The Soviet working people fear the transformation of East Europe into hostile, imperialist-allied states extending NATO to their own border. The Kremlin bureaucrats exploit this legitimate fear to crush popular unrest and democratic aspirations in East Europe, as in Czechoslovakia in 1968. There were numerous reports that Soviet soldiers were shaken when on occupying Prague they encountered not a bloody fascist counterrevolution, as they had been told, but protests by Communist workers and left-wing students.

Revolutionary Polish workers cannot hope to appeal to Soviet soldiers unless they assure them that they will defend that part of the world against imperialist attack. And a proletarian political revolution in Poland must extend itself to the Soviet Union or, one way or another, it will be crushed.

- For trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on a program of defending socialized property!
- For the strict separation of church and state! Fight clerical-nationalist reaction! Guard against capitalist restorationism!
- Promote the collectivization of agriculture!
- For workers control of production, prices, distribution and foreign trade!
- For proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy—For a government based on democratically-elected workers councils (soviets)!
- Break the imperialist economic stranglehold—Cancel the foreign debt! Toward international socialist economic planning!
- For military defense of the USSR against imperialism!
- For the revolutionary unity of the Polish and Soviet working classes!
- For a Trotskyist Party in Poland, section of a reborn Fourth International! ■

Polish Social Democrats Arm in Arm with Clerical Reaction

All the Pope's Dissidents

"The strikes in Poland mark a significant turn in Eastern Europe because workers and dissident intellectuals have joined forces in a major conflict with the Government," noted a news analysis in the *New York Times* (23 August). As to the existence of the alliance there is no doubt. From the beginning of the Polish strike wave in early July and in the early stages of the shipyard occupations, dissident circles in Warsaw were the main source of information for the imperialist press. In addition, several of the key strike leaders have been publicly associated over the past several years with opposition defense groups, and they have drawn in prominent Catholic intellectuals as "expert advisers." So while the ruling bureaucracy has been reluctant to use force against workers in the Baltic ports, on August 20 police in the capital rounded up 14 well-known dissidents accused of illegal association.

Who are the Polish dissidents? Western commentators hail the appearance of a "worker-intellectual alliance." Yet the non-Stalinist left-wing press sounds the same theme. Thus we find favorable interviews with dissident leader Jacek Kuron being printed everywhere from the liberal *Le Monde* and *Der Spiegel* to publications of the ostensibly Trotskyist United Secretariat. Meanwhile, *New York Times* columnist Flora Lewis (whose articles often seem to reflect the views of the CIA) praises Kuron as "a responsible man, a moderate and a patriot." Is this the "new coalition" which sophisticated Western fomenters of counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc degenerated/de-

formed workers states have been looking for as their "captive nations" relics fade into oblivion? Or does it portend a movement for "socialist democracy," as some on the left would have us believe?

Certainly none of the prominent dissident groups and personalities has a good word to say about socialism, which is identified with the perversion of proletarian rule represented by the present Stalinist bureaucracy. The dissidents' role as a conduit to the capitalist media is nothing new—Sakharov has been at it for years in the Soviet Union. Nor are appeals to the imperialists via the UN, the Helsinki Agreements, etc. What is particularly ominous about the Polish dissidents, who range from social democrats to openly Pilsudskiite reactionary nationalists, is their active (and largely successful) effort to form an alliance with the Catholic hierarchy. For it is the church together with the land-holding peasantry which form the social basis for counterrevolution in Poland.

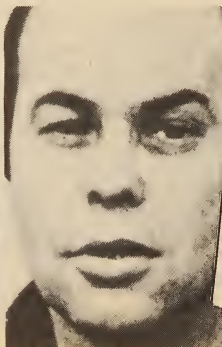
KSS-KOR: Social Democrats for Popery

The best-publicized Polish dissident group in the West is the Committee for Social Self-Defense (KSS), better known by its original name Workers Defense Committee (KOR). The leading spokesman for KSS-KOR is Jacek Kuron, and its newsletter *Robotnik* includes among its correspondents Lech Walesa, the leader of the Interfactory

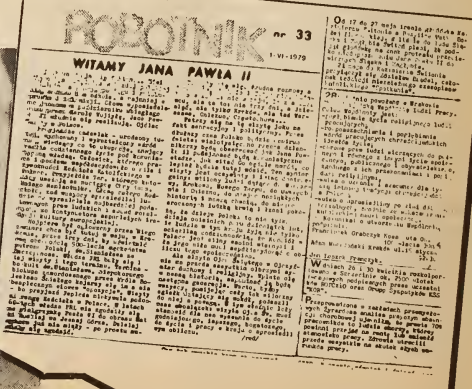
Social-democratic KOR's *Robotnik* hails Pope Wojtyla-John Paul II in 1979 as "the defender of human rights."



Adam Michnik



Sipa Jacek Kuron



Sipa

Strike Committee centered on the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. The KOR was formed after the suppression of the June 1976 strikes at Radom and Ursus, and originally centered its activities on raising funds for and demanding release/reinstatement of the hundreds of workers arrested and fired at that time. After a general amnesty a year later it became the KSS and concentrated on building ties to key factories through *Robotnik*. Most of the pseudo-Trotskyist left in the West has come out in support of the KSS-KOR in varying degrees.

Because of its name and origins and the reputation of Kuron, KOR is sometimes referred to by superficial observers as "Marxist in orientation." Social-democratic is a far more accurate description, and even that does not do justice to some of the anti-Marxist elements around it. Of the original 24 founders of KOR, six are former members of the pre-war Polish Socialist Party (PSP), among them the prominent economist Edward Lipinski. (*Robotnik* was the name of the PSP paper as well.) The list also includes a former chairman of the Christian Democratic Party, a delegate of the World War II London exile government, various activists from the 1968 student movement (among them historian Adam Michnik), left Catholic writers (such as former party member Jerzy Andrzejewski, author of *Ashes and Diamonds*), several veterans of the 1944 Warsaw uprising and Rev. Jan Zieja ("Polish Army Chaplain in the 1920 and 1939 campaigns"—i.e., a died-in-the-wool Pilsudskiite priest who twice fought the Red Army).

Jacek Kuron was first known in the West for co-authoring (with Karol Modzelewski) an "Open Letter to Communist Party Members" in 1964; for this he became a victim of bureaucratic repression, spending six years in jail. The United Secretariat opportunistically hailed the Kuron-Modzelewski text, with its syndicalist program and fuzzy analysis (which called Poland a "bureaucratic state") as the "first revolutionary Marxist document" to come out of the post-war Soviet bloc. Since then, however, Kuron has moved far to the right, now posing the struggle in East Europe as one of "pluralism vs. totalitarianism." In his "Thoughts on an Action Program" Kuron supports peasant struggles for private property, claims "the Catholic movement is fighting to defend freedom of conscience and human dignity," and concludes with a call for the "Finlandization" of Poland:

"We must strive for a status similar to Finland's: a parliamentary democracy with a limited independence in the field of foreign policy where it directly touches the interests of the USSR."

The Clerical Opposition

Marxism it ain't. But this social-democratic program for a peaceful restoration of capitalism represents the *left* wing of the dissident movement. The right wing is openly clerical-nationalist. There was a split in KOR in 1977 leading to the formation of ROPCIO, the Movement for the Defence of Human Rights. The latter is based on the founding declaration of the UN and the Helsinki accords and offers itself as an instrument to "cooperate with all international organizations which defend human rights...." Where KOR publishes *Robotnik*, ROPCIO puts out *Gospodarz* (The Peasant) and appeals to the Catholic rural population. And this is not the Catholicism

of Vatican II, either. The *Economist* (9 September 1978) refers to this outfit as "the stronghold of more conservative, national and—with some of its members—traditional anti-semitic tendencies." To get ROPCIO's number, one only has to note that the first signer of its platform is General Borutyz-Spiechowicz, the highest commanding officer of pre-World War II Poland, and that it distributes Pilsudski calendars.

ROPCIO, in turn, gave rise to an even more reactionary group, the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN), whose stated goal is to "end Soviet domination by liquidating the power of the Polish United Workers Party." Then there comes the Polish League for Independence (PPN), a clandestine group, and remnants of the pre-war ultra-rightist, anti-Semitic, fascist National Democratic Party. All of them, of course, cover themselves with rhetoric about "democracy." This gives rise to the Polish dissident joke: "Question: What's a Polish nationalist? Answer: Someone who wants to drive the Jews out of Poland even though they aren't there any more." More respectable than these would-be pogromists is the liberal Catholic ZNAK movement, which has several representatives in parliament. While ZNAK leaves clandestine bravado for the fringe groups, their aims are no less counterrevolutionary: they are merely waiting until an

continued on next page

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explosion when they will step in as the only mass-based opposition.

The Dissidents' Pope

The core of the clerical opposition, of course, is the Catholic hierarchy, a disciplined army extending from the village priest right up to the Vatican. Stalin's famous remark, "How many divisions does the pope have?" indicates military realism. But in Catholic Poland, probably the most religious European country today (even the men go to mass!), the church is a powerful political force. Unlike Hungary's Cardinal Mindszenty, who was discredited by cooperation with the Horthy dictatorship, the Polish pope (who brags he once was a worker) could be an effective rallying point for counterrevolution. A revealing article by the former editor of the CIA's house organ, *Problems of Communism*, Abraham Brumberg, makes this crystal clear:

"The Catholic Church has been crucial in the growth of a political opposition in Poland. Had it not been for the support of the Church, even the new alliance between 'the intelligentsia, village, and workers' to which Kuron refers would probably have failed to survive the hatred of the authorities."

—*New York Review of Books*, 8 February 1979

Brumberg points out that the original KOR demands for amnestying workers arrested and fired in the June 1976 strikes were almost identical to those of the episcopate. "Since then, the parallels between statements by the Church—and especially by Cardinal Wysinski, whom Michnik strongly, if not uncritically, admires—and those of the opposition have become even more conspicuous." He points out that supporters of the ZNAK group have participated in the "flying university" circles sponsored by KOR, which in Krakow used churches for its classes with the permission of then-Archbishop Wojtyla. Michnik described the new pope as one of the two "co-founders of the anti-totalitarian policy of the Polish Episcopate" (*Der Spiegel*, 23 October 1978). Michnik, a Jew, is so enamored of the new, "enlightened" Catholic primate that he wrote of the pope's visit last year:

"It will be a powerful demonstration of the bond between the Polish people and the world of Christian culture, a demonstration of their solidarity with the Catholic Church, and a demonstration of their yearning for freedom, the champion of which they see as being their fellow countryman John Paul II, the defender of human rights."

For Polish Trotskyism!

This paean to the standardbearer of capitalist restoration in Poland was printed without comment in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* (July-August 1979), a joint publication of supporters of the USec and the "state-capitalist" British SWP of Tony Cliff. But these pseudo-Trotskyists are not satisfied with such a tepid brew. A subsequent issue of *Labour Focus* reprints an interview (by the French USec paper *Rouge*) with Leszek Moczulski, who was a member of the Moczar faction of the PUWP at the time it ran the 1968 anti-Semitic purge and now heads the KPN. The journal comments that Moczulski is more militantly anti-government than KOR, and hails the formation of his clerical-reactionary party as "an event

almost without precedent in the history of Eastern Europe since the late 1940s"! Meanwhile, USec leader Ernest Mandel laments that the Stalinist bureaucracy in Poland has not "permitted a democratic and intense political life, including a legal Catholic party..." ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, October 1979).

This pandering to clerical reaction is a far cry from the revolutionary social democracy of a Rosa Luxemburg, who wrote in 1905:

"The clergy, no less than the capitalist class, lives on the backs of the people, profits from the degradation, the ignorance and the oppression of the people. The clergy and the parasitic capitalists hate the organized working class, conscious of its rights, which fights for the conquest of its liberties."

—"Socialism and the Churches"

In fact, in all the publications of the Polish dissidents which we have consulted, some hundreds of pages, there is *not* one reference to Luxemburg, Poland's greatest contribution to the Marxist movement. "Naturally," because she was a Jew and hardly a Polish nationalist. But neither is there a reference to other authentic Polish Communists, such as Julian Marchlewski, Leo Jogiches and Felix Dzerzhinsky. One of the greatest crimes of the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy is that it has discredited the name of communism among thinking workers.

Now the outcome of the strike has pushed the social-democratic dissidents further to the right, further toward clericalism and toward the imperialists. A few days after the settlement KOR leader Jan Litynski waxed eloquent over the historic mission of the Polish church, in an interview with Brumberg:

"In general it seems to me that the Catholic Church over the past thirty years has displayed so much wisdom, common sense and realism, that we are fully entitled to trust it. I'm absolutely convinced that the Church will never do anything that might prove harmful to the interests of the nation."

—"After Gdansk: Two Interviews," *New York Review of Books*, 9 October

And writing in the prestigious West German *Der Spiegel* (15 September), Michnik calls for capitalist economic blackmail:

"...I would like to repeat my counsel to Western public opinion: economic help to the new leadership in Poland should be made dependent on respecting the provisions of the Gdansk settlement."

The present crop of Polish dissidents are overwhelmingly *enemies* of the cause of proletarian socialism. They act as direct conduits to the church and the West. Today we do not see "dissident" Stalinists of the Titoist mold. On the contrary, the most left-wing are the East European equivalent of the "Eurocommunists." But where in the capitalist West this is but another variety of reformism, more closely tied to its "own" bourgeoisie, in the Soviet bloc countries passing from Stalinist to Eurocommunist means joining the camp of counterrevolution. Authentic Trotskyism stands not for the bogus "unity of all anti-Stalinist forces"—including disciples of Wojtyla and Brzezinski—but for a class-conscious communist opposition to the parasitic bureaucracy. And those would-be leftists who today follow the Kurons and Michniks should realize that if they are successful in bringing off a national revolt together with the clerical reactionaries, Kania & Co. will be the first to go, *but they will be next.* ■

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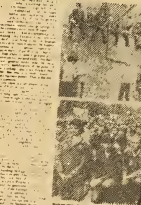
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For Proletarian Political Revolution!**

Polish Workers Move



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Polish workers move



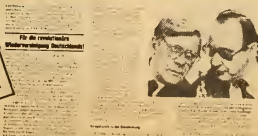
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**Fight clerical reaction!
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Polish workers move



The Korean war and
the "third camp"

CIA espionage:
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SWP 1956 vs. SWP 1980

"Pure Democracy" or Political Revolution in East Europe

Shane Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* was published in 1959 as a pamphlet by the forerunner of the Young Socialist Alliance, youth group of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). (Mage became one of the founding leaders of the Spartacist tendency, though subsequently he abandoned Marxism.) The material in this pamphlet was a central element in the development of our tendency's understanding of proletarian political revolution and capitalist counter-revolution in the East European deformed workers states, and it is exceptionally prescient concerning the present crisis in Poland.

The core of the pamphlet is a 1957 factional polemic against the right-wing majority of the Shachtmanite Independent Socialist League (ISL) and Young Socialist League (YSL). The right wing's advocacy of "general democratic aims" in the Hungarian Revolution was an important, final step in its liquidation into "the State Department socialism" of official American social democracy. The "Third Campist" Shachtmanites' unification with Norman Thomas' Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation (which they soon came to dominate) as well as the nature of the Hungarian Revolution itself pushed the left wing of the ISL/YSL, led by Mage, James Robertson and Tim Wohlforth, toward Trotskyism and a fusion with the then-revolutionary SWP in 1958. Thus, Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* was an important polemical attack by the then-Trotskyist SWP on its principal social-democratic opponent.

The heart of Mage's argument (reprinted below) is that "pure democracy" in East Europe—a sovereign parliament based on free elections—would likely lead to the victory of a petty-bourgeois, clericalist party (such as the Hungarian Smallholders or Polish Peasant parties), which would in short order restore capitalism. Mage further pointed out that such counterrevolutionary parties need not call for nor effect the immediate denationalization of statified industry. Rather they would subordinate the nationalized industry to the interests of the domestic petty bourgeoisie and international capital. In this Mage was not expressing some peculiar, heterodox view, but was following Trotsky who in 1937 wrote: "Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon the nationalized economy" ("Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?," *Writings* [1937-38]).



Classic symbol of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution: Stalin's statue toppled and dragged through the streets of Budapest.

At the same time, Mage insisted that such a counterrevolution was *not* what had occurred in Hungary in October-November 1956. The effective organs of power were the workers councils, which expressed an, albeit confused, socialist consciousness. The clerical-reactionary forces around Cardinal Mindszenty were relatively weak.

Reading this 1959 Young Socialist pamphlet today, the *reformist degeneration* of the SWP in the past two decades becomes strikingly visible. The *parallelism* between the Shachtmanites' position on Stalinist-ruled East Europe in the 1950s and that of the SWP (and its bloc partner, the West European-centered followers of Ernest Mandel) today is remarkable, indeed almost uncanny. Both ignore or deny outright the counterrevolutionary potential of the Catholic church. And the Catholic church is *qualitatively more powerful* in Poland today than in Hungary in 1956. Both support organized social democracy in East Europe—the Shachtmanites Anna Kethly's Hungarian Social-Democratic Party, the SWP/Mandelites Jacek Kuron's Committee for Social Self-Defense (KOR) in Poland. Both call for full "democratic" rights for *all* political formations, including counterrevolutionary ones.

The increasingly oppositional stance of Pope Wojtyła's church, in bloc with the social-democratic KOR, has forced the revisionist "Trotskyists" into the role of lawyers for clerical reaction in Poland. About a year ago Mandel came out for the legalization of a Catholic party in Poland. Today the SWP explicitly endorses the Polish strikers' *anti*-democratic demand to grant Cardinal Wyszynski's episcopate special access to the state-owned media. "I'd like to see a daily Wyszynski Hour on television," says *Militant*

staff writer Fred Feldman at a New York City forum on 30 August.

Yet one of the main programmatic conclusions of Mage's *The Hungarian Revolution* is the need to restrict the democratic rights of the Catholic church and clericalist political groups in East Europe and, if necessary, to suppress them. Mage's 1959 pamphlet was by no means the first nor the only time the SWP, when it was still Trotskyist, recognized the counterrevolutionary role of clerical-nationalist forces in Stalinist-ruled East Europe. The February 1947 issue of the SWP's *Fourth International* contains a scathing polemic against the Shachtmanites by Ernest Germain (Mandel) entitled "The Conflict in Poland." While this polemic is marred by Mandel's belief that the Stalinists were incapable of overturning capitalism in East Europe, it rightly savages Shachtman for defending the democratic rights of Polish bourgeois parties. Mandel singles out Stanislaw Mickolajczyk's mass Peasant Party as the main reactionary force in Poland. "Mickolajczyk, personally, is an ultra-reactionary politician," he writes, who serves "as a shield for the underground bourgeois opposition up to the moment when the latter will be able, given a different national and international conjuncture, to overthrow the present [Stalinist] regime." Mandel then goes on to state in capital letters:

"WE COUNTERPOSE TO THE POLICE TERROR AND PROVOCATIONS OF THE STALINISTS THE REVOLUTIONARY TERROR OF THE MASSES as a thousand times more effective method of fighting fascism. We demand complete freedom of the workers' movement which includes... above all the freedom to arm a powerful workers' militia, which will eliminate the fascist bands.... Not for a moment, however, do we undertake the defense of our main enemy, the Polish bourgeoisie and all its political lackeys." [emphasis in original]

At one time Mandel and the SWP called for "REVOLUTIONARY TERROR" against the Mickolajczyks and Wyszynskis in Poland. Today, they, just like their Shachtmanite opponents of yore, defend the same Polish political lackeys of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Mage's pamphlet also contains a devastating attack on Herbert Aptheker's *The Truth About Hungary*, the principal American Stalinist defense of the Kremlin's crushing of the Hungarian Revolution. The leading historian of the CPUSA attempts to convince his readers that this vast popular, proletarian-centered uprising was all a result of a deep-laid imperialist plot. Mage has little difficulty and much evident polemical relish in exposing and demolishing Aptheker's endless lies and distortions.

A more serious and sophisticated apology for the Soviet military intervention came from a pro-Stalinist faction in the SWP led by Sam Marcy. The Marcyites argued that, in the absence of Trotskyist leadership, the workers' bourgeois-democratic illusions would inevitably lead them to accept the restoration of capitalism. They further maintained that that was just what was happening in Hungary when the Russian Stalinists cut the process short.

Mage wasn't able to deal with the Marcyite position, then internal to the SWP. However, that section of his reply to Aptheker (reprinted below) explaining why the Hungarian uprising was in essence a proletarian political revolution stands as an answer to the Marcyites as well.

As Mage points out, the real power in the land were the workers councils, which were clearly *not* anti-communist. Indeed, they overwhelmingly supported the national-liberal Stalinist Imre Nagy. The Budapest revolutionary

committees elected as co-leaders of the Revolutionary Military Committee a Communist, Colonel Pal Maleter, and General Bela Kiraly, former Communist who remained closely associated with the Nagy group. The Budapest Parliament of Workers Councils adopted as its first programmatic principles that "the factory belongs to the workers" and that "the supreme controlling body of the factory is the workers council" (reproduced in Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* [1976]). While this is a syndicalist deviation from Marxian socialism, it is also incompatible with a capitalist order and parliamentary sovereignty over economic policy. On the available evidence, the Hungarian workers looked toward an idealized version of Titoist Yugoslavia—an independent "socialist" country with workers self-management.

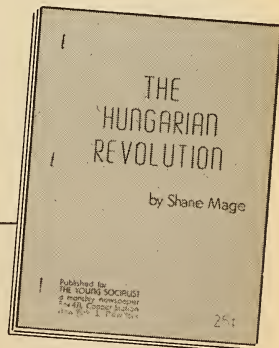
Mage's writings on the Hungarian Revolution are not without weaknesses. As a subjective revolutionary in transition from Shachtmanism to Trotskyism, he at this point did not accept the deformed workers state theory and still retained a soft attitude toward undifferentiated "anti-Stalinism." Thus, he allowed neutralist protestations by the Hungarian dissidents to go uncriticized. More seriously, he maintained that even if capitalist restoration were a certain outcome of the upheaval, "the actual Russian intervention would still be an impermissible denial to the Hungarian people of the right to choose their own social system." Mage here is guilty of elevating the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination over defense of proletarian state power and of the USSR against capitalist-imperialism.

These questions are in a way more sharply posed in Poland today than in Hungary in 1956. Unlike the Hungarian working class in 1956, which expressed a partial and confused socialist consciousness, the Polish strikers and their main leaders clearly identify with the powerful Catholic church opposition and also exhibit pro-Western sentiments. The liberal West German newsweekly *Der Spiegel* (8 September) described the premier strike leader Lech Walesa as a "committed Catholic and nationalist" who "has not the least in common with communism." Thus, while Trotskyists could and did wholeheartedly support the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, in Poland today we must warn that the workers movement—especially the new "self-governing trade unions"—could become subordinated to the reactionary Catholic church and its imperialist backers.

From
*The YSL Right Wing
and the
"Crisis of World
Stalinism"*

The Right Wing and "Democracy"

It is no accident that the key phrase in the analysis of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions is "democracy"—not
continued on next page



"bourgeois democracy", not "workers democracy", not even "peasant democracy", but plain, unqualified "democracy", "democracy" *in general*. There may be some younger members of the YSL who see nothing wrong with this procedure. I advise all such comrades to study very carefully the writings of Lenin on this subject, notably "State and Revolution" and "Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky." The key thought, absolutely basic to the Marxist theory of the state, is that any form of government in a class society, including a democracy, essentially embodies the domination ("dictatorship") of one class over the others. This is especially true of workers democracy because the proletariat, inherently a propertyless class, cannot rule except directly and politically, i.e., through its own class organizations of the "soviet" type. Any form of "pure" "classless" democracy "in general" can only express the domination of the economically strongest class, i.e., is necessarily bourgeois democracy.

These basic considerations are well known to the members of the NAC [National Action Committee], and presumably these comrades accept them, at least formally. What the resolution does is simply to declare them inapplicable to the revolution under Stalinism, in the following way:

"What must be remembered is that under Stalinism, the fight for democracy has a different social meaning than it does under capitalism, so long as it is limited to general democratic aims and demands no other change. Under capitalism, such a struggle represents a struggle for capitalist democracy. Under Stalinism, where the means of production are statified, the fight for democracy which calls for no other changes, and hence seeks the democratization of statified property, becomes the revolution for democratic socialism, even if it is not so consciously expressed."

What we have here is a schematic formula, rigidified into a fetish, used as a substitute for a concrete historical analysis. The leaders of the YSL have for a long time relied on the formula that Stalinism is not socialist because its nationalized property is not accompanied by political democracy. The obvious corollary to this is that nationalized property plus political democracy is *socialism*. And this is the theoretical essence of the quoted paragraph.

This is a good example of the dangers inherent in an agitational over-simplification. It's a lot easier and more effective for us to talk about "democracy" as a prerequisite for socialism than to use that nasty term "dictatorship of the proletariat." In the case of the YSL right wing, this has gone past a mere tactical adaptation of language and has become an adaptation of thought. The struggle for socialism under Stalinism ceases to be a struggle for workers power, and becomes a struggle for "general democratic aims."

The false, abstract, undialectical character of the methodology of the NAC majority is exemplified by the proposition that the struggle against Stalinism is the struggle for socialism "so long as it is limited to general democratic aims and demands no other change." But of course the reality of the revolution in Eastern Europe is not that of pure democracy and "no other change." A huge number of economic and social changes which are not necessarily those flowing from "general democratic aims" are the inseparable accompaniment to the popular revolution against Stalinism: to cite only the one change referred to by the resolution, the peasants have spontane-



Jean-Claude Lattès

Horthyite Cardinal Mindszenty, U.S. imperialism's agent for counterrevolution in Hungary.

ously eliminated collectivized agriculture, and restored private property on the land. It is exactly these *changes* that determine the actual character of the revolution against Stalinism, not an abstract formula about the relation of "democracy" to "socialism."

The formula nationalized property in industry plus political democracy equals socialism is not even true on an abstract level, no matter how useful agitationally. If it was true, Austria and Burma, both of whose industry is largely nationalized, and both of whom have relatively democratic political structures, would be socialist states. The essential prerequisite for development toward socialism is the raising of the working class to the position of a ruling class, or, in precise scientific terms, the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship.

Would the struggle for "general democratic aims" under Stalinism be sufficient to raise the working class to the level of a ruling class? The NAC resolution answers in the affirmative, on the basis of its formula.... A real answer, however, must rest on a concrete analysis of the Polish and Hungarian revolutions.

"Democracy" and Capitalist Restoration

The key question is this: *theoretically*, was it possible for the Polish and Hungarian revolutions to result in the restoration of capitalism? The NAC draft resolution precludes this, since it states that "democracy" is sufficient to define "the revolution for democratic socialism." This view, in my opinion, is possible only on the basis of a singular ignorance of the actual social and economic forces determining the evolution of Poland and Hungary, and the world context in which these revolutions took place.

What would have been the development in Poland or Hungary if the revolution had in fact achieved the establishment of formal democracy, of the Western type, with "no other change"? We here must abstract from the actual level of socialist consciousness attained by the Polish and Hungarian workers, since this is not a determining

factor in the argument of the NAC resolution. It should, however, be made clear that I believe this level of socialist consciousness was the decisive factor in the whole development, the key to the future of these countries.

The establishment of formal democracy, if it means anything at all, means free elections to a sovereign parliament. Free elections, in turn would mean the establishment of a government reflecting the numerically largest section of the population. In Poland and Hungary this majority is *not* the working class. It is the petty-bourgeoisie of town and country, the peasants, small shopkeepers, artisans, and the old middle classes.

Could free elections in Poland and Hungary result in fact in a government representing this petty-bourgeois majority? A majority cannot express its rule unless it is organized. Could this majority have been organized?

Here we come to one of the most shocking features of the NAC draft resolution. The authors of the draft have made the most stupid omission possible in a resolution on Poland and Hungary: *there is no mention whatever of the Catholic Church*, either as a religious institution or as a social force!

Yet, in both Poland and Hungary the Church is the *one* institution to emerge full blown from the Stalinist regime, with a highly organized and stable apparatus, a long tradition of continuity, and a high degree of popular prestige. The actual power of the Catholic Church is shown by the enormous extent to which religious education was reintroduced into the schools in Poland and Hungary (particularly in Poland, there have been frequent reports of the persecution of atheist and Jewish children by Catholic majorities). The power of the Church was shown most dramatically by Cardinal Wysinski's intervention on behalf of Gomulka at the time of the recent Polish elections—an action which, according to all reports, played a major part in saving the Gomulka regime from what seemed likely to be a drastic setback. Can there be any doubt that in really free elections the candidates endorsed by the Church would have a huge advantage among the Catholic majority?

What role does the Church desire to play in these revolutions? The Draft Resolution states that in Poland and Hungary "forces which advocate capitalist restoration ... were extremely small and carried no weight." It is true that neither in Poland nor in Hungary did the Church present an openly capitalist program. But it is not necessary for it to do so. The Catholic Church, by its very nature as an international body completely controlled from the Vatican, plays a certain role in world politics—the role of an important ally of U.S. imperialism and of capitalist reaction in all countries. *If it felt free to do so*, what reason is there to think that the Church headed by a Mindszenty would act differently than does the Church in Italy, Spain, or Austria? And if free elections should return a parliament with a Catholic majority, reflecting the Catholic majority in the countryside, wouldn't the Church feel free?

There seems to me to be a high degree of probability that really free elections in both Poland and Hungary would return a petty-bourgeois, clerical majority. Free elections were never held in Poland after the war, but if they had been held, few except the Stalinists have denied that they would have been won by the Peasant Party of Mikołajczyk. Free elections were held in Hungary, and they resulted in a substantial majority for the Smallholders Party, led by the

clerical reactionaries Ferenc Nagy and Msgr. (!) Bela Varga.

Would a government of Mindszenty-Ferenc Nagy or Mikołajczyk-Wyszinski have been able to restore capitalism? It is here irrelevant to argue that no such governments could, in fact, have been formed—because they obviously could have been *if the revolutions had remained within the bounds of formal parliamentary democracy* with full democratic rights for all parties and individuals, including clerics and emigrés. The question at issue is precisely the nature and role of such formal parliamentary democracy in East Europe—remember that the draft resolution considers this "democracy" *equivalent to socialism*.

I believe that a petty-bourgeois government in either Poland or Hungary, if allowed to stabilize itself and get a firm grip on the country, would be able to bring about a return to capitalism, and in very short order. The first step would be the absolutely necessary one, for any non-Stalinist government, of restoring capitalist relationships in agriculture and small production and retail trade. The NEP in Russia continually tended to develop restorationist tendencies, epitomized in the rise of the kulaks and Nepmen. Bukharin's policy of concessions to these capitalist elements would in fact have brought about this sort of capitalist restoration despite the subjective desire of the Bolshevik right wing to prevent it. NEP in a backward and exhausted country is a dangerous business at best—if placed in the hands of the political representatives of the kulaks and Nepmen (and the peasant and petty-bourgeois parties could be nothing else) it would certainly lead straight to capitalism.

Another decisive aspect of the return to capitalism under petty-bourgeois democratic leadership would be the ties of Poland and Hungary with the capitalist world market, most important, of course, with the gigantic economic strength of U.S. imperialism. It is no secret that the main positive political program of U.S. imperialism toward East Europe is based on massive economic aid, in the form of "loans" and outright gifts. This "aid" would have a dual effect: it would be a political ace of trumps in the hands of the bourgeois politicians who alone would have access to the American largess, and it would very rapidly serve to reorient the economies of Poland and Hungary back to their traditional dependence on Western capitalism. Lenin once remarked that he was far less afraid of the White Guard armies than of the cheap Western commodities they brought in their train. American commodities entering Eastern Europe under petty-bourgeois governments would not merely be *cheap*—they would be free!

And what would become of the nationalized industries? Their fate would serve the interests of the peasants and petty-bourgeoisie and the needs for trade with the Western capitalists. Hungary and Poland can be capitalist states without denationalizing a single large industrial plant; all that is necessary is to convert the industry, democratically of course, into an appendage of the peasant economy and the world economy.

What does this mean? An orientation entirely to consumer goods production, for the benefit of the peasants. A cessation of new investment and even repairs, since this would divert resources away from the petty-bourgeois sector. Abandonment of industries that could not compete on the world market—why should a Polish

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shopkeeper pay twice as much for a Zeran car as for a superior Volkswagen? Such investment and modernization as takes place to be financed by private Western capital, at no cost to the national economy.

And the consequences of this for the workers? Wages kept low, to keep down the cost of production. Workers councils would naturally not be allowed to interfere with the decisions of the democratic majority on questions concerning the management of the economy. The present grossly overexpanded work force would be sharply reduced as an obvious rationalization measure. And of course, the workers representatives would not hold power in the government and parliament; after all, in a democracy, doesn't the majority rule?

We should here re-emphasize that the above is *not* a picture of what I believe to have been the real perspective before Hungary and Poland, the real class nature of these revolutions. It is a picture of a real possibility of the evolution of these countries, if the workers had restricted themselves to "general democratic aims." The essential thing that it shows is that it is completely *false* to argue that the establishment of parliamentary democracy is sufficient to convert a Stalinist state into a Socialist one. Under Stalinism as under capitalism, there is no such thing as *democracy in general*; there is proletarian democracy, and there is bourgeois democracy. Nothing else. The "classless" parliamentary forms of democracy, in a country with a peasant and petty-bourgeois majority, *represent bourgeois democracy*.

The Socialist Alternative

If a formal and parliamentary democracy was likely to lead to a petty-bourgeois government and the restoration of capitalism in Poland and Hungary, what should have been the socialist alternative to these "general democratic aims?" The answer was given by the Russian Revolution, which also took place in a backward country in which free parliamentary elections would have necessarily resulted in a restoration of capitalism. That answer is the establishment of the *state power of the working class*.

In Hungary this solution was indicated perfectly by the course of the revolution itself, in which the decisive organs of revolutionary struggle were the *workers councils*. These councils were created in the course of the struggle by the spontaneous action of the workers themselves, and quickly proved themselves to be the political leadership of the entire nation.

The *workers council* or *soviet* represents the indicated form for the establishment of workers power in Hungary and, with slight difference of form, in every other country. In a country like Hungary, the creation of councils of working peasants, peasant soviets, would provide a means whereby the peasant majority could be represented in the government while preserving the state power of the proletariat through its class institutions. In scientific terminology, the *state* emerging from the revolution would be a *workers state*; the government would be a *workers and farmers government*.

Of course the mere establishment of a republic of workers councils in Poland or Hungary does not guarantee these countries against capitalist restoration. The proletarian regimes in East Europe would immediately be faced by the same sort of problems which beset the first soviet

republic under NEP, and, if the revolution should fail to extend itself to the advanced countries of Western Europe, these states too would degenerate and eventually collapse. What the workers republic would guarantee is the *opportunity* of the working class at every point to impose its own conscious socialist direction on the nation.

It may be that some comrades who have never read Lenin or forgotten what they once learned will claim that this is "undemocratic", because a soviet type of state would mean the rule of a *minority*, the working class, over the majority of the population, mainly peasants. In reply to this objection, we point out the following basic facts:

- 1.) The peasantry, even where it is in the majority, is incapable of ruling in its own name. As a stratum of small commodity producers, i.e., a petty-bourgeois class, it tends to follow behind its natural leaders, the petty-bourgeois and "middle class" elements in the cities. In East Europe, this has been and is concretely expressed in the allegiance of the peasantry to the Catholic hierarchy. A government "representing" the East European peasantry would be dominated by clerical and pro-capitalist forces, which not only are a much smaller minority than the proletariat, but are of course a reactionary, inherently anti-democratic minority as well.

- 2.) The state of a soviet type, in terms of the actual rights and powers enjoyed by the masses of the people, including the poor peasants, is infinitely more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic, freely-elected parliament and all.

- 3.) In the actual revolution, the working class was the undisputed leader of the entire nation, and was the sole social force capable of an all-out struggle to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy. This fact gives it the highest democratic right to establish its own state. Historical experience shows that the working class is able to win support from large sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry only when it shows them that it is capable of acting to solve the problems of the entire society in a revolutionary fashion on its own, trusting only to its own class forces.

The question naturally arises: if the Russian counter-revolutionary intervention had not taken place, would the Hungarian revolution have, in fact, resulted in a republic of workers councils? Of course, we cannot answer this question definitively. But certain clear facts about the objective and subjective aspects of the Hungarian revolution indicate that an affirmative answer was highly probable.

The first and decisive thing about the Hungarian revolution is that it was a *workers* revolution, and the leading role of the workers was institutionally formulated by the establishment of *workers councils*. Except for the Russian army, there was in Hungary not the shadow of a social force capable of preventing the assumption of state power by the workers councils. Thus the objective conditions for the formation of a soviet republic, in the event of revolutionary victory of course, were entirely favorable.

The actual level of consciousness of the Hungarian workers, however, was not at the level indicated by the objective possibilities of the revolution. In this the Hungarian workers were like the Russian proletariat after the February revolution. The general demand was *not* for all power to the workers councils, but for "free elections" to



UPI
True face of Catholic reaction: Franco's troops occupy revolutionary Barcelona, 1939.

a sovereign parliament.

It would, however, be a disastrous mistake to take the level of consciousness corresponding to the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy as the permanent and ultimate political program of the Hungarian proletariat. The Hungarian workers wanted "free elections," but they also wanted to preserve their own councils and extend their powers. They wanted to move forward to socialism, not backward to capitalism.

If the revolution had been successful, the workers councils would have emerged with the decisive aspects of state power, de facto, in their hands. They would not be likely to surrender this power to the petty-bourgeois and clerical government resulting from "free elections." A state of dual power between parliament and soviets would tend to emerge. In this the Hungarian workers would, in their own way, be recapitulating the experience of the Russian working class. In Russia, as we all should know, the proletarian revolution was followed by free elections to a constituent assembly, the most democratic type of bourgeois parliament. Petty-bourgeois parties, of a far more "leftist" type than would be found in the Hungary of Mindszenty, dominated this constituent assembly. In Russia, it took only a day to make clear to the workers councils that they could not tolerate the existence of a bourgeois government by their side. The Russian workers acted in the right way; under the leadership of the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky they dispersed the parliament and made it clear to the entire world that the soviets were the only power in Russia. The Hungarian workers would eventually be faced with the same problem, and eventually would have to act in the same way, or see the conquests of their revolution seized from them by the restorationist elements.

The Need for a Revolutionary Party

The Russian workers were able to act as they did only because of the presence of a revolutionary Marxist party, capable of anticipating events, drawing the lessons of the proletarian struggles, and taking resolute revolutionary action. In Hungary too, the establishment of the power of the workers councils would require such a party. The absence of a bolshevik party was one of the main causes for

the strength of bourgeois-democratic and even pro-western illusions among the workers. These illusions were the inevitable product of the situation of the Hungarian working class, of its experiences under the Stalinist dictatorship. They could be overcome only in the course of open political struggle after the destruction of the Stalinist regime. To do this, to raise its consciousness to a higher level, the Hungarian working class would have had to absorb the experience of a century of revolutionary socialist struggles, and most of all the experience of the last half-century of Marxist political thought, the body of theory developed best of all by Lenin and Trotsky.

For the Hungarian working class to learn these lessons would have been, at the same time, for it to construct a revolutionary Marxist party capable of leading the proletariat to the consolidation of its own power. Failure to reach this new level of class consciousness, failure to create a bolshevik party, would have meant that the working class would, sooner or later, let the state power slip out of its fingers and into the hands of the "democratic" majority representing the petty-bourgeoisie and the Church.

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From

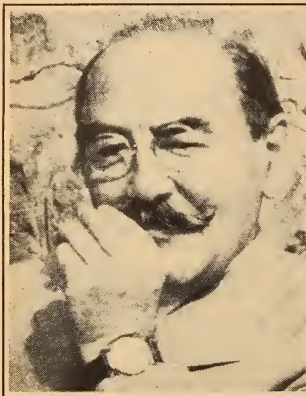
*"Truth" and Hungary—A Reply
to Herbert Aptheker*

The Hungarian working class was the central actor in the Hungarian drama—and the working class is totally omitted from Aptheker's version of the "truth" about Hungary! More exactly, Aptheker mentions the workers only to *deny* that they played any role. He asserts: "the workers of Budapest by and large adopted an apathetic or passive or neutral attitude."

It is surely not necessary to recapitulate here the great number of eyewitness accounts proving that the main fighting forces were made up of young workers, that the heaviest fighting took place in the working class districts (like Kobanya, Ujpest, —and "Red Csepel," the proletarian stronghold of Hungarian Communism and the last center of resistance against the second Russian intervention). It should be enough to cite the curious manner the Hungarian workers chose to show their "neutrality"—a complete general strike and the formation of Workers Councils!

The sequel to the second Russian intervention showed the real nature and strength of the contending social forces in Hungary so clearly as to remove any possible doubt on this score.... The fascistic groups vanished into thin air (or rather, into Austria and thence other countries of the "free world," to prepare for new adventures). Mindszenty hid in the United States embassy. [Smallholders Party leader] Bela Kovacs was invited to join the Kadar government, but refused and announced his "retirement" from politics. But the workers councils remained and carried on a fierce struggle against the Russian occupier and its Kadar puppet government. As late as December 12, all Hungary was gripped by a general strike. In the end, as we know, the Kadar government was able by the threat of starvation to break the strike. It proceeded to arrest the workers' leaders and destroy the Workers Councils, on the pretext that the Councils "have preoccupied themselves with exclusively political questions with the objective of organizing a sort of

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Lessing Maagnum

Hungarian
"liberal-
nationalist"
Stalinist
Imre Nagy.

second power, opposed to the State Power." [*France-Observateur*, 3 January 1957]

The bitter irony of a self-styled "Revolutionary Workers and Peasants Government" outlawing the only representative organs of the Hungarian working class should not blind us to the fact that with this declaration the Kadar government has definitively posed the *real* choice in Hungary. On the one hand, the "State Power" of the discredited Stalinist bureaucracy resting on Russian bayonets; and on the other, the "second power," the state power of the Hungarian working class exercised through its elected democratic bodies, the Workers Councils. The Hungarian Workers Councils of 1956 were the legitimate heirs of the Workers Councils (Soviets) of 1919. Aptheker thus is closer to the truth than he suspects when he claims that the heirs of Horthy played a decisive role in the Hungarian revolution!

The real spirit of the Hungarian workers revolution was eloquently expressed by Sandor Racz, a young worker 23 years old, who was elected chairman of the Budapest Central Workers Council. On December 8 Racz gave an interview to the correspondent of an Italian newspaper, to be published only if he was arrested. He declared:

"I have a tranquil conscience because I have been the unfortunate spokesman for the will of the workers and for all those who have fought for the ideal of a free, independent, and neutral Hungary and for a socialist state. ... All that has been refused to us. The government knows that the country is against it, and since it knows today that the single organized force which truly made the Revolution is the working class, it wishes to destroy the workers united front."

—[*Il Giorno*, 14 December 1956]

As he had anticipated, Racz was arrested the moment he went to meet representatives of the Kadar government, who had promised to negotiate with the workers. ...

One of the most unfortunate aspects of Aptheker's book is that its preoccupation with a fictitious "White Terror" prevents us from coming to grips with the *real* restorationist danger. I earlier referred to the universally-held capitalist view that the Hungarian revolution was aimed at achieving "Western-style democracy." A brief discussion of this is necessary here.

The claim that the Hungarian revolution oriented toward "Western-style democracy" was more than a

theory; it was a *political program*. The leaders of the "West" knew as well as the Russians that it would be impossible to impose a new Horthy on the Hungarian people. Therefore, capitalism could be restored in Hungary *only* in "democratic" guise. Certain aspects of Hungarian society make this more than a utopian dream.

A majority of the population of Hungary is rural, attached to private property (Stalinist "collectivizations" did not exactly weaken this attachment), and economically drawn to the West. Furthermore, the religious majority in Hungary is Catholic. The planners of "Liberation" had good grounds to hope that the establishment of a Western-style parliamentary system would result in a government reflecting these majorities, under the leadership of emigré politicians and the Catholic hierarchy. Especially since they had powerful extra-democratic means of pressure, in the form of economic "aid" and the activities of the fascist fringe we met earlier.

Could capitalism have been restored in this way? Certainly if the Hungarian revolution had been allowed to develop freely, there is a *possibility* that this would have happened. (Of course, even if this development were *certain*, which is not at all the case, the actual Russian intervention would still be an impermissible denial to the Hungarian people of the right to choose their own social system.)

The danger of capitalist restoration thus really existed. But nothing at all justifies the Western claim that the revolution was essentially a struggle for the "democratic" return of "peoples capitalism." The Western version of the "counter-revolution" thesis, like the Stalinist one, is false because it ignores the key factor in the revolution—the working class.

The Hungarian working class, even though it may have been confused about many things, did not fight for "Western-style" democracy—it fought for *socialist* democracy. The workers of Gyor showed this when they suppressed the meeting in favor of [the right-wing emigré] Ferenc Nagy. The workers council of the 11th District of Budapest showed this when it demanded "free elections in which only those parties may participate that recognize and have always recognized the Socialist order, based on the principle that means of production belong to society." [quoted in Free Europe Committee, *Revolt in Hungary—A Documentary Chronology of Events* (1956)]

But the decisive refutation of the idea that Hungary was returning to "Western-style democracy" is the simple fact that the workers all over Hungary, in the heat of the revolution, created their own *Workers Councils* as organs of the political rule of the working class. What has this to do with capitalist "democracy"? To smash the threat of capitalist restoration, the Hungarian workers would merely have had to exert the power that already lay in their hands, to give all power to the workers councils and not, as in so many past revolutions, give up their power to a capitalist parliament.

To grasp the loathsome hypocrisy and mendacity of the capitalist "friends" of the Hungarian revolution, the reader need only ask this question: What would be the attitude of these Dulleses, Mollets, and Edens if the workers of Paris, London, or Detroit were to form *their own* workers councils and attempt to establish a "Socialist order, based on the principle that means of production belong to society"? ■

Revisionists on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Eurotrotskyist Mandel vs. Caudillo Moreno

With Carter's renewed Cold War offensive, we are once again bombarded with the rhetoric of "the free world versus Soviet totalitarianism." And certainly one of Stalinism's greatest services for the imperialist bourgeoisie has been the identification of Marxian socialism with a gray, bureaucratic police state. The brutal terror, crushing censorship and ludicrous frame-ups have dragged the liberating goals of Marxism through the mud. Every day the working people of the United States and West Europe have had pounded into them that they enjoy greater freedom under capitalist democracy than under the Soviet bloc's dictatorship of the proletariat.

The various "Trotskyist" revisionists have expectedly capitulated to the intense and growing anti-Communist ideological campaign in the imperialist West. They have used Trotsky's revolutionary opposition to Stalinist bureaucratic rule as a cover for an essentially social-democratic rejection of the proletarian dictatorship. This is precisely the function of the main resolution, "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," adopted by the majority tendency of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec) at its 11th World Congress in November of last year.

This document gives to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" a purely bourgeois-democratic content. Behind its for-the-ages abstractness, "Socialist Democracy ..." is a sustained polemic for granting to pro-imperialist forces within the Soviet bloc full political rights, including the right to win governmental power. In a defense of this document, Mandel, perhaps prophetically, explicitly comes out for the legalization of a Roman Catholic party in Poland, a clerical-nationalist party inspired by pope Wojtyla and Zbigniew Brzezinski! "Socialist Democracy ..." is nothing but an echo of Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign refracted through the Eurocommunist/social-democratic milieu.

When Mandel's draft of "Socialist Democracy ..." first came out in 1977, the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) expressed general agreement with it, while the political adventurer Nahuel Moreno used it as a foil to pose as a leftist "anti-revisionist." However, at the 11th World Congress, after the Morenoite Bolshevik Faction had split, the SWP put up a counterresolution, "Socialism and Democracy" (1979 *World Congress of the Fourth International* [January 1980]).

The SWP is thoroughly reformist on its American terrain and prostitutes Marxism in the service of liberalism. While the inveterate impressionist Mandel tends to ride all the way on his latest hobbyhorse—not so long ago Guervarist guerrillaism, most recently Eurocommunism—the SWP sometimes tries to be less flagrantly revisionist in its formal, international documents.

"Socialism and Democracy" has the same key

formulation as do the Mandelites: "... the workers must be free to organize groups, tendencies and parties without *a priori* ideological restrictions." Presumably then a proletarian political revolution in the USSR would enable a Sakharov or a Solzhenitsyn to contest for soviet delegate. Basically the SWP's "Socialism and Democracy" carefully *avoids* clearly stated positions on the central controversial issues. The adopted USec majority resolution explicitly states that pro-bourgeois *parties*, even if they support (though not yet violently) imperialist governments, should have the *same* political rights as proletarian socialist parties. That is the long and the short of it. The SWP document implicitly accepts this position, but doesn't express it so bluntly.

In one sense the Mandelite/SWP ultra-liberal pronouncements about socialist democracy are baloney. When they find it opportune to cheerlead for one or another Stalinist regime, these revisionists will defend the suppression not of pro-bourgeois tendencies, but of left oppositional groups, including their own "comrades." In the early 1950s Pablo, Mandel & Co. apologized for the Mao regime's imprisonment of the veteran Chinese Trotskyists, contemptuously dismissing them as "refugees from revolution." A decade later the Pabloites, now joined by the SWP, covered up and defended the Castro regime's persecution of the Cuban Trotskyists (followers of Juan Posadas), whose printing press was smashed for bringing out Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*!

Recently these most democratic of "socialist democrats" have gone even further. In Nicaragua they have defended the suppression of the left not by a Stalinist regime of a deformed workers state (bad enough), but by the petty-bourgeois bonapartist government of a capitalist country! The petty-bourgeois radical Sandinista/bourgeois coalition in Managua imprisoned and expelled the followers of Nahuel Moreno and various Maoists, mainly for agitating the workers. The Mandelites apologized for the Sandinista crackdown, while the SWP actually endorsed and may even have inspired it! In a small-time way the Mandelites/SWP have demonstrated once again that the defenders of "democratic rights" for Hindenberg and Ludendorff will be lawyers for the murderers of Luxemburg and Liebknecht.

The difference between the SWP and Mandelites at the 11th World Congress was incidental friction. Moreno, on the other hand, used Mandel's social-democratism as the central rationale for an oppositional faction. Having spent most of his political career as a deep entrist in the Peronist movement, Moreno represents that tendency of ostensible Trotskyism closest to populist-nationalist bonapartism. Exiled from Argentina by the 1975 rightist coup, he adopted a new persona as the dynamic *jefe* of world Trotskyism. With the Mandelites tailing the Eurocommu-

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nists and the SWP as usual tailing the liberals, Moreno decided a "left" oppositional posture would be advantageous.

But the Morenoites' "hard Bolshie" pose was as much a sham as the Mandelite/SWP ultra-democratism. On splitting from the USec last fall the Morenoites immediately blocked with Pierre Lambert's Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), which is to the right not only of the Mandelites but even of the Eurocommunists. The neo-Kautskyan and virulently Stalinophobic OCI has embraced the pro-Western Soviet-bloc dissidents even more fulsomely than has the USec. And raising the banner of anti-Soviet nationalism in *imperialist* Europe, the Lambertists call for the *unconditional* reunification of Germany through "a national constituent assembly East and West," a demand presumably adopted from the late Konrad Adenauer!

Mandel's ultra-democratism and Moreno's revolutionary Third Worldist bonapartism are each in their own way poses which can be dropped or even reversed tomorrow. Nonetheless, it is important to inoculate would-be revolutionaries against these symmetric revisionisms of the Marxist program of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

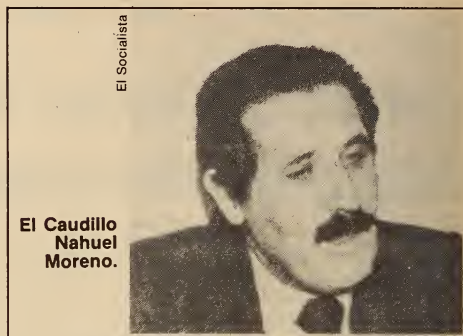
The Revolutionary Purpose of the Proletarian Dictatorship

"...if our purpose is the abolition of private property in the means of production, the only road to its solution lies through the concentration of State power in its entirety in the hands of the proletariat, and the setting up for the transitional period of an exceptional regime—a regime in which the ruling class is guided, not by general principles calculated for a prolonged period, but by considerations of *revolutionary policy*." [our emphasis]

—Leon Trotsky, *Terrorism and Communism* (1920)

This passage draws the fundamental line of demarcation between Bolshevism and the "democracy above all" revisionists from Kautsky to Mandel.

The proletarian revolution certainly liberates the creative political energies of the working masses and provides them with far greater real democratic rights and freedoms than they have under bourgeois parliamentarism. Without the active participation of the great majority of the population in political life, the transition to communism—where classes have disappeared and the state has withered away—is inconceivable. Nonetheless, workers democracy is a means to an end, not an end in itself. That end is the creation of the political, economic and cultural precondi-



tions for communist society. The most fundamental of these preconditions is the maintenance of proletarian state power and collectivized property. Therefore, the forms and extent of workers democracy are *subordinate* to the defense of proletarian class rule against the forces of bourgeois counterrevolution.

At this point the "pure democrats" pretending to be Marxists will argue that there can be no contradiction between granting bourgeois parties full democratic rights and preventing them from restoring capitalism. They will even argue that such democratic rights will expose the bourgeois forces before potential followers and so demoralize them. For the "pure democracy" revisionists the bourgeoisie, after it has been overthrown and expropriated, is reduced to either putschism or a harmless, quixotic ideological opposition.

Mandel's "Socialist Democracy..." projects the complete impotence of a bourgeois opposition as a rationale for granting it "freedom of political organization":

"The workers have no need to fear as a mortal danger propaganda that 'incites' them to give the factories and banks back to private owners. There is little chance that a majority of them will be 'persuaded' by propaganda of that type."

Lenin's answer to this kind of argument in his *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918) expresses a fundamental difference between revolutionary Marxism and social-democratic revisionism:

"...in every profound revolution, the *prolonged, stubborn and desperate* resistance of the exploiters, who for a number of years retain important practical advantages over the exploited, is the *rule*." [emphasis in original]

Among these advantages Lenin lists superior education, managerial capacity, close connections with the higher technical personnel and incomparably greater experience in the art of war. He also points out that "a section of the exploited from the least advanced middle-peasant, artisan and similar groups of the population may, and indeed does, follow the exploiters." And furthermore:

"If the exploiters are defeated in one country only—and this, of course, is typical, since a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries is a rare exception—they *still* remain *stronger* than the exploited, for the international connections of the exploiters is enormous." [emphasis in original]

Lenin's reference to the *international* connections of the bourgeoisie particularly highlights the revisionism of

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Moreno's
"first
"revolutionary"
mentor,
Juan
Perón.

Mandel's "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Central to this document is a fundamental distinction between the exceptional condition of civil war and the supposedly normal, peaceful state of the proletarian dictatorship:

"...the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat can be preceded by civil war or foreign military intervention, i.e., attempts by the former ruling classes and their international allies to overthrow workers power by force. Under such conditions, the rules of war apply. Restrictions on the political activities of the bourgeoisie may well be called for."

But for Moreno this can only be for the moment. In his reply to Moreno he ridicules the idea of "decades of civil war."

What a profoundly nationalistic view of proletarian revolution! We are here literally presented with the program of building "socialist democracy in one country" undisturbed and unconcerned by revolutions, civil wars and wars in the rest of the world. This is, of course, precisely the program of liberal Stalinism/Eurocommunism, of the Dubceks and Berlinguers.

While the imperialist bourgeoisie are not inverted Trotskyists, they instinctively understand that the key to restoring capitalism in the Soviet bloc (whether or not bureaucratically ruled) is isolating it or, to use an early Cold War term, "containing" it. The forces for capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and East Europe arise from the *interaction* of imperialist pressure, economic and military, from without and potentially counterrevolutionary social groupings from within—liberal intellectuals of the Sakharov type, the church, a section of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The Polish social democrat Jacek Kuron, who is lionized by the USec, calls for the Finlandization of his country and by extension all of East Europe:

"We must strive for a status similar to Finland's: a parliamentary democracy with a limited independence in the field of foreign policy where it directly touches the interests of the USSR."

—"The Political Opposition and the Threat of Intervention from Without" in Jiri Pelikan and Manfred Wilke, eds., *Menschenrechte: Ein Jahrbuch zu Osteuropa* (1977)

And when the Soviet army is now battling U.S.-backed feudalist reactionaries in Afghanistan, Andrei Sakharov calls on the United Nations (that den of imperialist thieves and their colonial victims) to pressure the Soviet govern-

ment into withdrawing.

According to Mandel, pro-bourgeois groupings in a workers state have an inalienable right to call on international capital to use economic blackmail (as do Sakharov and Polish social democrat Adam Michnik, for example), to vocally support imperialist military buildups and interventions in backward countries and to agitate against aid to revolutions abroad (for example, to North Vietnam and the Vietcong fighting the United States). In other words, he advocates giving capitalist restorationist forces the fullest freedom of agitation and organization short of actual recourse to terrorism or armed insurrection. Any government of a workers state which followed such an ultra-liberal policy would insure that bourgeois counter-revolutionary forces were maximally prepared when they did risk insurrection.

To be sure, a revolutionary workers government would not deal with reactionary, pro-bourgeois tendencies as the Stalinist bureaucracy usually does. While the Stalinists can only combat such oppositionists through state terror, a revolutionary regime would have at its disposal a far more effective weapon: moral authority before the working masses and the perspective of world revolution.

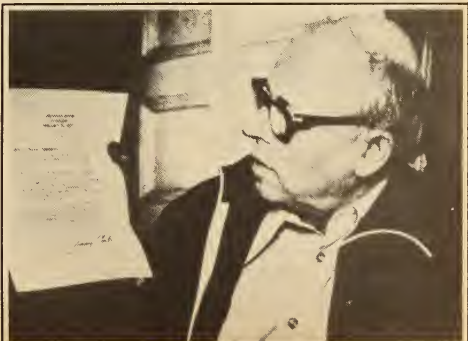
In defending himself against Moreno's charges of revisionism, Mandel resorts to a highly *selective* citation of the Transitional Program. He bases his entire case on this one passage:

"Democratization of the soviets is impossible without *legalization* of soviet parties. The workers and peasants by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties." [emphasis in original]

Mandel latches onto the second sentence to argue for the legalization of *all, including bourgeois-restorationist, parties*. He projects that soviet democracy will encompass not only the social democrats and Stalinists, but also bourgeois-nationalists such as the Peronists in Argentina, PRI in Mexico, Congress Party in India, etc. ("First Comments on Nahuel Moreno's 'The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat,'" [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* Vol. XVI No. 9, October 1979).

Trotsky was extremely precise in formulating the Transitional Program. Why did he call for the legalization

continued on next page



Pro-Western dissident Andrei Sakharov waves letter from Jimmy Carter.

of "soviet" parties, not of all parties? Mandel chooses to interpret Trotsky's formulation as a meaningless tautology. For Mandel a soviet party is *any* party elected to the soviet. Moreover, since one cannot tell in advance which parties the workers and peasants will elect, any party that contests for soviet office is *ipso facto* a soviet party. Presumably if the fascists find it tactically expedient to run for soviet delegateship, the Mandelites would have to defend their legal right to do so.

Fortunately, to understand Trotsky's position, one is not reduced to logical inference. Mandel carefully *omits the immediately preceding passage*. Let us see why:

"It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets. In the soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, rank-and-file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men." [emphasis in original]

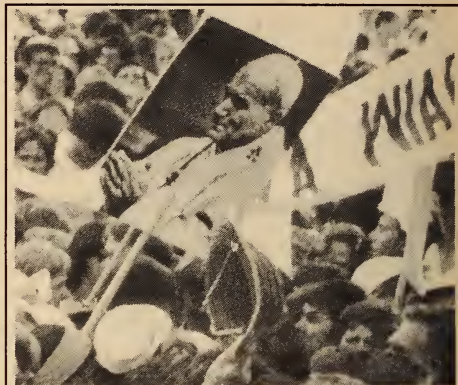
Mandel now stands stark naked in his revisionism and no amount of terminological trickery can hide it. Trotsky not only regarded the exclusion of the bourgeoisie from the soviets as a matter of course, but also called for the expulsion of the Stalinist bureaucrats, who in part stand within the workers movement.

To summarize: soviet democracy should encompass those parties, chosen by the workers and their petty-bourgeois allies, which stand for and defend the socialist order. As a norm all groupings which do not actively work to overthrow the socialist revolution should have freedom of expression, which is not the same as the right to form soviet parties. How to deal with counterrevolutionary groupings is a *tactical* question to be determined by such factors as their particular nature and following, the international situation, etc.

Enter El Caudillo Moreno

Nahuel Moreno fancies himself the Lenin of today and he no doubt considers *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Bogotá, 1978) as the *State and Revolution* of today. This opus is presented both as a definitive attack on present-day revisionism (using Mandel as a foil) and as a grand strategy in the struggle for power.

The polemical exchange between Moreno and Mandel



Gorgoni/Contact

Mandel calls for legalization of a party led by pope Wojtyla in Poland.

has an odd quality. It is as if, for some reason, Juan Perón and Enrico Berlinguer were debating political first principles in Trotskyese. Both disputants are obviously uncomfortable arguing within the Trotskyist framework and resort to various improvisations, dodges and falsifications to break out of it.

Each is most effective making orthodox debating points against the other's symmetric revisionism. Moreno cannot be gainsaid when he asserts that the Mandelites/SWP have "foisted onto the dictatorship of the proletariat objectives and a program 90% similar to the Eurocommunist program and diametrically opposed to that of our teachers." In turn, Mandel condemns Moreno accurately enough for opposing workers democracy in the name of the uncontrolled rule of "the revolutionary party." He characterizes Moreno's book as "strewn with theoretical concessions to the [Stalinist] bureaucracy."

Actually Moreno expresses those elements of Stalinist ideology which are common to nationalistic bonapartism in general. The adventurer-caudillo polemizes against the Mandelite/SWP social-democratism not from the standpoint of a Lenin or Trotsky (or even that of a Stalin), but rather from that of a Juan Perón or Gamal Nasser.

Moreno devotes an entire section of his book to attacking "soviet fetishism," hardly a major deviation in the contemporary left. What Moreno is really opposing is not a fixation with a particular *form* of proletarian organization during an insurrection, but rather workers democracy *as such*. He constantly *counterposes* "the dictatorship of the revolutionary party" (that is, of Moreno and his gang) to soviet democracy:

"...the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat in the next decades will be synonymous not with soviet organizations, but with revolutionary dictatorships of Trotskyist parties or parties becoming Trotskyist [?]...." "The revolutionary dictatorship of proletarian parties, not soviet or multi-party soviet systems, is an objective necessity imposed by social reality, the existence of different sectors among the workers and toilers as well as the low political and cultural level of the majority of these sectors." [our emphasis]

Moreno's revisionism here is as blatant as Mandel's. The Transitional Program considers "it would hardly be

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possible to think up a better" form of organization for proletarian revolution and that "the slogan of *soviets*, therefore, crowns the program of transitional demands."

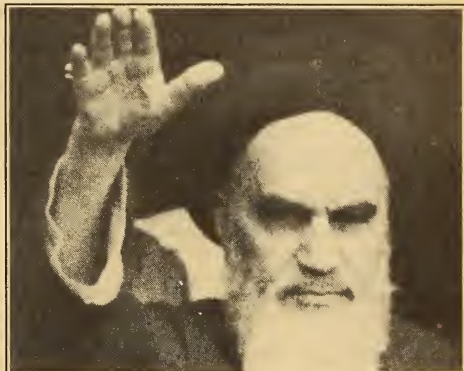
It is true that Trotsky on occasion criticized soviet fetishism, for example, in his 1924 *The Lessons of October*. But he always maintained: a) that if the revolution is not organized on the basis of soviets, it must be organized on the basis of other inclusive proletarian organs (e.g., factory committees, trade unions); and b) that in any case soviets would be established on the morrow of victory as the governmental form of the proletarian dictatorship.

In one respect a consistent adventurer-bonapartist, Moreno not only rejects soviet democracy in a workers' state, but proletarian organs *per se* as the basis for socialist revolution. As an alternative to soviets he offers the mass corporatist institutions of various bourgeois-nationalist regimes. For example, he maintains that at certain periods in Argentina a proletarian revolution was possible on the basis of the Peronist trade unions, semi-corporatist bodies subordinated to a wing of the bourgeois office: corps.

In Iran today the Morenoites have gone even further and call for "proletarian dictatorship" based on the Islamic Revolutionary Committees (*shoras*), the "popular" corporatist organs of a movement analogous to European clerico-fascism in the 1930s! Their "vanguard" Colombian serico proclaims: "Our great task is to hold a Congress of Shoras in the whole country!!! And it should govern!" (International Supplement to *El Socialista*, 8 May 1980). In fact, the *actual* politics underlying *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* is best revealed by the Morenoites' attitude toward Khomeini's Iran. While all the fake-Trotskyist groupings tailed the mass Islamic mobilization, the Morenoites' infatuation with Khomeini's regime went deeper and is more sinister.

What appeals to the Morenoite mentality about the "Iranian Revolution" is precisely its *anti-democratic* character, precisely the *faghi's* (leader's) freedom from any

form of representative government. The "Iranian Revolution" is what Khomeini says it is. How much the would-be "Trotskyist Imam" from Argentina must envy this man his charismatic power over the masses, his command of the unquestioning loyalty of thousands of militant youth. Here one recalls that Moreno's first "revolutionary" mentor, Juan Perón, learned his politics in Mussolini's Italy, though he applied it in the very different setting of a semi-colonial country dominated by a landed oligarchy.



Der Spiegel

Morenoites call for a government based on Khomeinist Islamic Revolutionary committees in Iran.

Just as Moreno's criticism of soviet fetishism is but a cover for his bonapartist conceptions, so his opposition to Mandel's supposed European centeredness amounts to unabashed Third Worldism. He maintains that the West European (and North American) working classes are so corrupted by the crumbs from the imperialists' table and by bourgeois-democratic freedoms that they cannot become revolutionary until reduced to the wretched state of, say, the Chilean or Iranian masses:

"We archio-Trotskyists believe that objective reality will destroy all the bourgeois-democratic expectations of the masses, and that as long as objective reality has not yet destroyed these expectations, no effort at demonstration can succeed. As long as the European workers have not experienced brutal economic crisis, annual inflation of 100 to 150%, the appearance of fascist bands, bonapartist and fascist *coups d'état*, their bourgeois-democratic illusions will not disappear. No one and nothing can destroy them."

In other words, proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries has been objectively impossible for the past three decades and continues to be so.

But this means that proletarian dictatorships can exist only in backward countries besieged by the imperialist powers, the very condition conducive to bureaucratic degeneration/deformation. This is, in fact, the heart of Moreno's theory. The Morenoinos' profound contribution to Marxist theory is "the two-stage dictatorship of the proletariat." The first stage, which we are supposedly now in, is *defined* by the dominance of capitalist-imperialism on a world scale:

"As a result of the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established in isolated and backward countries, it will not have just a single stage, as the

continued on next page

Down with Khomeini's Holy War Against the Left in Iran

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founders of Marxism believed. Rather than simply the stage of construction of socialism, today the dictatorship of the proletariat has two clearly defined stages.

"What we are now seeing is the first stage, which is characterized by the confrontation with imperialism...."

—"Declaration and Platform of the [Morenoite] Bolshevik Faction," [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* Vol. XVI, No.3, July 1979

This is recognizably the ideological outlook of the Stalinist bureaucracies as well as various Third World nationalist regimes pretending to "Marxism-Leninism." Stripped of its utopian gloss the essential content of "socialism in one country" is the impossibility of proletarian revolution in the imperialist centers for a lengthy and indefinite period (to use the Morenoite term, "a stage"). The Stalinist bureaucracies see themselves confronting an unshakable imperialist order for the foreseeable future and so resort to defensive military measures and diplomatic maneuvering (in practice, international class collaboration). In turn, the permanent threat from the "enemies of the socialist fatherland" serves as an ideological justification for bonapartist rule.

We can now summarize the 300 pages of *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Moreno and his gang, disguising their "Trotskyism," infiltrate the mass corporatist institution of some bourgeois-nationalist regime, like the Peronist trade unions. At some point they

take it over, while appealing to a section of the officer corps in the name of "anti-imperialist" nationalism. The unwashed masses are deemed too selfish, too short-sighted to be democratically entrusted with the decades-long defensive struggle against the imperialist powers. This requires the "revolutionary dictatorship" of... a "Trotskyist" *caudillo*.

This fantasy of a would-be Third World bonapartist, of course, has nothing in common with the Trotskyist permanent revolution. What separates Trotskyism from all manner of reformism and petty-bourgeois radicalism is the conviction that the overthrow of the world capitalist order is possible in the *present* historic period. The failure of the world revolution to date is *not* rooted in the objective conditions of contemporary capitalism, such as the division between economically advanced and backward countries, but rather in the reformist-bureaucratic misleadership of the working class.

The task of a revolutionary (Trotskyist) vanguard in a workers state is to provide political/organizational leadership (and possibly material/military support) for proletarian revolution internationally, *centrally within the imperialist powers*. Soviet democracy is integral to the international extension of the socialist revolution, inspiring especially the workers of the advanced (bourgeois-democratic) capitalist countries with a model of their self-liberation and control over their own future. ■

LTd'I Fusion...

(continued from page 24)

to candidates of the workers parties in the popular front: the bourgeois workers parties must break from their bourgeois partners.

(5) The LTd'I broke politically from the GBL in 1978, on the basis of the struggle waged by the iSt against the opportunist political and organizational conceptions of the GBL. The iSt continued engaging the LTd'I in clarifying political discussions, and at the August 1979 iSt International Conference the document approved with the agreement of the LTd'I observers said in part with reference to the LTd'I:

"The comrades of the LTd'I have shown an inadequate grasp of the methodology of Leninism on the importance

to the working class of the fight to defend democratic rights. This has led to disputes in the past... which must be expected to resurface in new forms."

A concrete expression of this was demonstrated later on at the Conference, during a discussion on the question of how to apply the Transitional Program to concrete trade-union struggles (the imminent bankruptcy of Chrysler). In that discussion some of the LTd'I leaders showed an inability to comprehend revolutionary Marxism, which centered on a semi-reformist approach to the question of nationalizations, under an ultra-left cover, and which was combined with a parochial worldview.

After several months of discussions with the I.S. [International Secretariat] of the iSt, a majority of comrades were convinced of the correctness of the iSt position, formulated in articles in *Workers Vanguard* (Nos. 238 and 247). The SL slogan, "Whatever Chrysler's worth, give it to the workers," is a powerful transitional demand for the specific situation posing class action against the sanctity of private property through such militant measures as factory seizures. While expressing the real felt needs of Chrysler workers, the slogan exposes the social democrats whose "nationalization" slogan is a cover for managing the capitalist economy "in the workers' interest" by having taxpayers assume the burden of subsidizing unprofitable enterprises.

In relation to the unprincipled behavior of some LTd'I members when questioned by the police early this year, the I.S. of the iSt wrote a letter pointing out that "when the LTI was raided by the police and its members held for interrogation, members of the LTI including comrade Moreno collaborated in this violation of your democratic rights.... To have gratuitously engaged in a 'dialogue' with the repressive organisms of the class enemy when you were

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not facing any charges brought against you and without insisting on your legal rights—and especially to have answered questions about the size and financial resources of the LTI!—shows criminal incomprehension of the most basic questions of the capitalist state and the class line.”

In April 1980, around this question of the elementary conduct of a communist toward the state, a majority of the LTD'I—through the decisive intervention of the I.S. of the iSt—consolidated its programmatic agreement with the iSt, passing a motion “to condemn the improper and potentially terribly dangerous and destructive conduct of the LTD'I members in the course of police interrogation,” whilst a tiny clique led by Moreno decided to split from the LTD'I and the iSt to pursue his Pabloite liquidationist orientation toward a particularly backward section of the Workers Autonomy, as shown by the support granted to the Mao-Stalinist “Struggle Slate” in the June 1980 elections in Rome.

(6) The LTD'I and the iSt recognize the burning need for Trotskyists today—particularly in the light of the USA/NATO's drive toward war over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, a progressive intervention that revolutionists support, raising the slogans “Hail Red Army!” and “Extend the gains of October to the Afghan peoples!”—to

strongly restate the principle of unconditional defense of the USSR and the deformed workers states against imperialism; ultimately this can be accomplished only by a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucrats and by workers anti-capitalist revolutions in the West.

(7) Left-wing terrorism is born out of petty-bourgeois despair and lack of confidence in the ability of the organized working class to make a successful proletarian revolution; the Red Brigades share this despair and lack of confidence, at the same time that they claim some kind of ideological continuity with the Stalinist partisans' activities in 1943-45 and in the post-war period. Trotskyists categorically reject terrorism as a systematic political methodology. As Trotsky said, terrorists are bureaucrats in reverse. However, leftist terrorists believe that they are acting to overthrow capitalism and revolutionists must defend them against persecution by the bourgeois state for attacks on symbolic targets or direct agents of the capitalist system and call for freeing those militants imprisoned as a result of such persecution. At the same time, Trotskyists cannot defend those left-wing terrorists responsible for indiscriminate terrorist attacks on the civilian population or for terrorist attacks against other organizations on the left, just as we condemn violence within the workers movement.

The LTD'I and the iSt understand as Leninists the importance to the working class of the fight to defend democratic rights against every attempt by the bourgeois state to attack them, either directly with its uniformed goons or indirectly through the fascist gangs.

(8) Trotskyism has always been extremely weak in Italy, and systematically discredited for the past 30 years by its main “representative,” Livio Maitan, in recent years with the help of the reformist LSR, Italian satellite of the Argentinian adventurer Nahuel Moreno. Thus, there is little of a Trotskyist tradition in Italy and the groups claiming to be Trotskyist are very weak: the far left is dominated by the New Left-Maoist, workerist, spontaneist and terrorist milieus. Thus, the LTD'I and the Italian far left have no real common language, nor references to accepted authorities and sources. At the same time, the accepted practices and norms of the Italian workers movement are Stalinist or Stalinist-derived, particularly the lack of a proletarian internationalist conception. The political and organizational development of the LTD'I as a Trotskyist organization can take place only in opposition to and through a critical reassessment of what is “generally accepted practice” on the Italian left, including on the most elementary level.

(9) The LTD'I is committed to recruiting Italian cadres and producing regular publications in Italian, engaging the centrist groups in political combat to regroup their best elements around the Trotskyist program: in this way we aim at establishing the Spartacist tendency in Italy as a stable propaganda group capable of fighting for the banner of Trotskyism and undertake exemplary work in selected working-class centers, offering to the militant Italian proletariat the road forward toward the building of the revolutionary leadership it needs to struggle and win.

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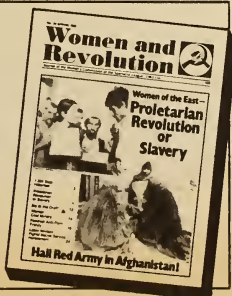
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Italian LTd'I Joins Spartacist Tendency

We reprint below the fusion declaration adopted by the Lega Trotskista d'Italia (LTd'I) and the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) this summer which represents the culmination of over five years of strenuous efforts by the iSt to regroup a nucleus of cadre from the far left, particularly the ostensibly Trotskyist groups, in Italy. For the iSt the fusion with the LTd'I implies a commitment of significant resources to strengthen the LTd'I to carry out the political tasks before it.

The process of winning this small group of young comrades included hard fights against the macho "star" conception of leadership which dominates the Pabloite groups on the far left, especially in Italy. Those who have been unable or unwilling to translate formal political agreement into practical understanding of Leninist norms, for example on the woman question, have gone by the wayside. In the greetings of the LTd'I to the Sixth National Conference of the SL/U.S. the comrades spoke of the importance of collective leadership in the tradition of Lenin and James P. Cannon:

"The fight to introduce Cannonism to Italy is essential for us. If in every country there is a tendency to national exceptionalism, this anti-Marxist attitude has always found a particularly fertile ground in parochial Italy. People should just ask themselves where else in the world is there another tendency which takes its national origins as a programmatic banner like the 'Italian left' does (i.e., the Bordighists)."

In opposition to centrists of all stripes, the iSt insists that the Trotskyist program is unitary—not merely the summation of individual political positions. Through a series of debates over programmatic questions such as Chrysler, the LTd'I comrades learned that apparently minor differences can have major political implications. The LTd'I greetings highlighted the rejection of "anti-imperialist" or "anti-fascist" rhetoric to conceal the class question:

"Italian exceptionalism is also combined with a generalized anti-Americanism in the left, a reflection of a deeply ingrained popular-frontist view according to which all goes badly in this country because of its subordination to American imperialism. Or 'if only Italy were really independent!' is the rallying cry of all the 'anti-imperialists.' They all stop where it is the elementary duty for a communist to start: the main enemy of the Italian working class is the Italian bourgeoisie, and this is what our organization stands for loud and clear. The main enemy is at home!"

We look forward to the development of a fighting revolutionary propaganda group in Italy.

International, of Trotsky's struggle in the Left Opposition and for the Fourth International as codified in the Transitional Program, whose essential conclusions as well as its method retain their full validity today, and of the nine points for international Trotskyist regroupment of the iSt.

(2) Trotsky's Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, was destroyed by Pabloite revisionism in the period 1951-54, and the task of Trotskyists today is to struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International. We reject the pretenses of the unprincipled blocs claiming to be the Fourth International or to represent its political and organizational continuity (USec, OCRFI, Parity Committee, etc.) We also reject the erroneous conception of a "family of Trotskyism" according to which the solution to the world crisis of revolutionary leadership is represented by the reunification of the "world Trotskyist movement." The main pusher of this conception is the anti-Spartacist bloc that includes a British group (the WSL) whose main leader is a scab (Alan Thornett), an Italian group which supports the PCI's "Historic Compromise" (the GBL), and a Chilean group that would like to repeat once again the experience of the Popular Front led by Allende, which opened the way for the bloody regime of Pinochet (the LOB).

(3) The tactic of revolutionary regroupment—necessarily involving splits and fusions—will play a central role in the fight for the rebirth of the Fourth International, as illustrated by the regroupment of the iSt with the Trotskyist Faction of the WSL in 1978, of the SL/U.S. with the Red Flag Union (a left-wing homosexual group) in 1977, and of the SL/B and the Leninist Faction of the WSL in 1980. The need for a regroupment of the Trotskyists on the basis of a principled programmatic agreement has been illustrated also by the political differentiation which took place in Italy between the positions of the iSt and the FMR (1974-75), the GBL (1976-77) and Marcello Braccini (1975-77), as well as by the experience of the struggle to win the LTd'I to Trotskyism.

(4) The origins of the LTd'I lie in the expulsion of its central elements from the GCR/LCR (Italian section of the USec) as the result of their fight against the GCR's capitulation to popular frontism in the 1976 Italian elections. With Trotsky, the LTd'I and the iSt recognize the decisive character of the issue of the popular front today as in the 1930s. Revolutionists can give no electoral support to bourgeois workers parties (Stalinists or social democrats) tied to or who openly support an open or implicit popular front, since participation in the popular front temporarily suppresses the contradiction between the socialist aspirations of the masses of those parties and the class-collaborationist practice of their bureaucratic leaderships. In elections, revolutionists call for conditional opposition

continued on page 22

(1) The international Spartacist tendency and the Lega Trotskista d'Italia agree to fuse—with the LTd'I becoming the Italian sympathizing section of the iSt—on the basis of the decisions of the first four Congresses of the Communist

MORENO TRUTH KIT

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Introduction

The expulsion of 60 "foreign Trotskyists" from Nicaragua by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) last August made headlines around the world. The deportees (now numbering over 100) were leaders of the Simón Bolívar Brigade, set up by Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction of the misnamed "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec). So when the USec not only failed to protest, but actually endorsed this repression by a bourgeois government, it sent shock waves through the clique-ridden parody of Trotsky's FI (currently preparing its "Eleventh World Congress"). Subsequent revelations (see "Did Camejo Turn Them In? *WV* No. 242, 26 October 1979) that leaders of the American SWP may have been complicit in getting their Morenoite "comrades" deported (and tortured by the Panamanian police) can only reinforce the momentum building towards split in the USec.

These circumstances have contributed to lending Moreno & Co. an image of militancy. Yet for years this current has stood on the far *right* wing of world ostensible Trotskyism. Here is the man who in Argentina in the early '50s helped set up a Peronist "socialist" party—a left wing of *bourgeois* populism. This is the one-and-only Moreno who in the mid-1960s wrote that Castro's stillborn "OLAS ... is the only organizational vehicle for power" in Latin America, yet in 1974 was backing the murderous Perón regime against left-wing guerrillas (whom it scandalously referred to as a "mirror image" of the AAA and other ultrarightist terrorists). It is the self-same Nahuel Moreno (aka Hugo Bressano) whose financial skulduggery is legendary

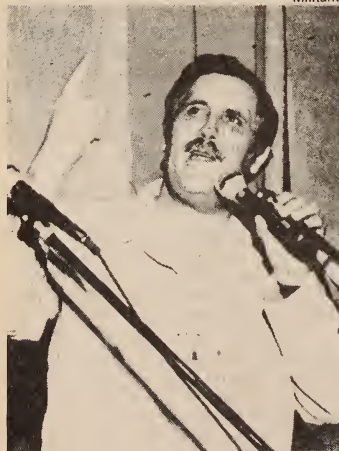
on the Latin American left: from allegedly running off with money intended for Hugo Blanco's peasant organizing in the '60s, to raising money for his Simón Bolívar Brigade today by hawking worthless "Sandino Bonds."

Nahuel Moreno is a cynical quick-change artist whose current political stands bear little (and often no) relation to what went before and what will come after. His "left" postures are frequently lifted lock-stock-and-barrel from other tendencies (including ourselves, such as his tardy discovery of the "Eurotrotskyism" of Ernest Mandel et al.). And his seeming orthodoxy on doctrinal questions is combined with "tactical" betrayals so shameless that they leave even the denizens of the USec swamp breathless. But the man is dangerous.

At a time when the USec stabs its comrades in the back in Nicaragua, even arranging their expulsion by the bourgeois authorities, and leads Iranian militants to the slaughter at the hands of Khomeini's clerical-feudalism, any honest would-be Trotskyist will be searching for a revolutionary answer to the treachery of Mandel and the SWP. And it is our duty as revolutionists to warn the workers movement against the fraud of Nahuel Moreno and his "Bolshevik Faction." That is the purpose of this "Moreno Truth Kit."

Be forewarned—this man is a cynical adventurer, political chameleon and financial swindler! And note also that it has been the international Spartacist tendency that has consistently exposed Moreno & Co. while pointing the way forward to the rebirth of an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International.

Militant



A LOS MEMBROS DE LA BRIGADA BOLIVARISTA DEL FSLN

Compañero Comandante
A nombre de la Dirección de la Brigada Bolívarista del FSLN, recibimos un saludo fraternal, revolucionario y militante para los compañeros de la Brigada Internacional Simón Bolívar, dispuestos a tomar parte en la lucha liberadora del pueblo de Nicaragua.

En el primer contingente de la Brigada que se encuentra aquí, y así desde los pases por la incorporación, vamos representados a los voluntarios que se encuentran en Colombia. Por intermedio de la Comisión Coordinadora Integrada por los compañeros Camilo González, Samuel George y Darío Amador, les informamos sobre algunas instrucciones con respecto a la integración del resto de compañeros.

Un saludo revolucionario de

FABRICA LIBRE O MUERTE

Junio 27 de 1979

COORDINADOR

Comandante Comandante en Colombia.
A nombre de la Brigada Bolívarista del FSLN.

Un saludo revolucionario a nombre del Frente Comunista de Liberación del FSLN.

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Nahuel Moreno (left) and documents distributed by "Simón Bolívar Brigade" boasting of subordination to FSLN.

SEPTEMBER 24—It took 18 months of bitter struggle, including two insurrections totaling eleven weeks of the bloodiest fighting, before they drove out the hyena of Managua. Almost 50,000 died out of a population of 2.3 million, and today the cities are in ruins, the surviving population on the brink of starvation, three quarters of the workforce unemployed. Those who have sacrificed so much are burning to root out every trace of the hated dynasty which bled the country dry. Laying claim to what is rightfully theirs, the Nicaraguan masses are already infringing on the property of the belatedly oppositional bourgeoisie, which for decades extracted fat profits from the sweat of the working people in Somoza land.

"National reconstruction" is now the watchword of the victorious Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). But on what foundations? With their program for a "government of unity of all anti-Somoza forces" the Sandinista leaders hope to limit the revolution to the replacement of a rapacious family dictatorship by a reformed, "popular-democratic" capitalist regime. As proof of the "generosity of the Nicaraguan Revolution," they have refused to execute any of the National Guard criminals who tortured at random and rained high-explosive bombs on their own cities. While expropriating the property of the tyrant and his underlings, the new rulers have vowed to protect the holdings of other capitalists.

From the beginning it has been clear to all that the "government" in Managua is highly unstable. The guns are clearly in the hands of the petty-bourgeois radical-nationalist Sandinistas, but a united FSLN was established only at the last minute by papering over a three-way split. While the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie" are presently pliant, and their influence declined as the fighting intensified, they are not passive nor are they discredited by the stigma of collaboration with the dictator as the Cuban capitalists were with Batista. On the other hand, the working masses are a far more active factor than in the Cuban Revolution, having armed themselves and fought key battles in the streets of the capital and other cities. The common enemy vanquished, it is impossible to stop the class struggle simply by telling the combatants to return home.

The array of forces in post-Somoza Nicaragua has the potential for an

explosive confrontation—within the uneasy ruling coalition, between it and the impatient working masses or between a sector of the radical-Jacobin FSLN and reactionary sectors of the domestic bourgeoisie. This highly charged situation poses an acid test for revolutionists. For while the overwhelming majority of the left to one degree or another is tailing after the popular Sandinistas, the task of Trotskyists, who fight on the program of permanent revolution, is to remain the party of intransigent working-class opposition. Those who proclaim that proletarian-socialist revolution can come about peacefully in Nicaragua by nudging the present bonapartist regime gradually to the left could well be the first victims of their own illusions....

Expulsion of the Simón Bolívar Brigade

The suppression of "disorderly" land seizures is not the only instance of measures to keep the class struggle from "becoming more acute." The most notable was the expulsion of several dozen foreign leftists, most of them self-proclaimed Trotskyists, associated with the "Simón Bolívar Brigade" which had rushed to Nicaragua in the last stages of the battle against Somoza. The incident was described by *Time* magazine (3 September) at the end of an article praising the "merciful revolution" that was "steering a middle course":

"Surprisingly, the first serious threat came from the extreme left. Dissatisfied with the government's plans for building a mixed economy melding public and private enterprise, 60 Latin-American Trotskyites, calling themselves the Simón Bolívar Brigade, incited a demonstration by 3,000 Managua factory workers demanding compensation for wages lost during the revolution. The revolutionary government reacted by ordering its armed forces to put the Trotskyites on a plane to Panama."

According to the *Washington Post* (21 August), banners at the August 15 Managua demonstration carried the slogans, "The Revolution is in the hands of the bourgeoisie" and "Power to the proletariat." The expelled Bolívar Brigaders, however, were charged with being "counterrevolutionaries" and "foreign provocateurs."

This expulsion was clearly a blow struck against any independent leftist agitation among Nicaraguan workers and must be roundly condemned by all would-be socialists. But this is not what the American Socialist Workers Party

excerpted from:

"Revolution in Nicaragua and the Left"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 240, 28 September 1979

(SWP) thought of it. The SWP did not protest at all. In fact, it issued four different "explanations" of the Sandinista repression against the ostensibly Trotskyist leaders of the Simón Bolívar Brigade, one of which consisted of quoting without comment a statement by the Nicaraguan ministry of the interior. Moreover, the SWP's explanations not only shamelessly support the FSLN government against their own "comrades," but they *join in the witch-hunt* themselves. An August 21 SWP Political Committee declaration entitled "New U.S. Propaganda Drive Against Nicaragua" states:

"The Simón Bolívar Brigade was organized by the Colombian PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers Party), under the direction of an international grouping known as the 'Bolshevik Faction,' led by Nahuel Moreno....

"In the case of the Simón Bolívar Brigade, the Bolshevik Faction never consulted the Fourth International about this project or about the policies the Brigade followed. These policies ran counter to the policies decided by the leadership bodies of the Fourth International.

"Through the Simón Bolívar Brigade the Bolshevik Faction led young militants from several Latin American countries—people who wanted to help the fight against Somoza—into a sectarian adventure. Masquerading as a section of the Sandinista Front (FSLN), the Simón Bolívar Brigade entered Nicaragua from the outside to engage in its own organizing efforts along the lines of 'outflanking' the Sandinistas on the left. Their tactic was to up the ante in what the Sandinistas were saying, trying in this way to build a counterforce to them.

"This grotesque idea—that people from the outside can maneuver to capture the leadership of the revolution from those who have emerged in the course of the struggle—has nothing whatever to do with Trotskyism, revolutionary socialism.

"The unfortunate episode of the Simón Bolívar Brigade was just what the Carter administration was waiting for."
—*Militant*, 31 August

In another article in the same issue of the *Militant*, on "The Facts About the Simón Bolívar Brigade," the SWP labels the Managua workers demonstration a "provocative clash" and accuses the leaders of the Brigade of having "acted irresponsibly." Again, the "fact"-sheet charges that the Brigade's attempts to "outflank [the FSLN] from the left" had "absolutely nothing in common with the position of the Fourth International." And it ostentatiously washes its hands of any association: "The Fourth International is in no way

responsible for the activities of the Brigade." Quite a mouthful coming from people who are formally part of the same "International."

The SWP's response to the expulsion of the Bolívar Brigaders was the most naked stab in the back by a section of the fake-Trotskyist "United" Secretariat (USec) since its supporters in Portugal found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades in the summer of 1977. But what about the other wings of this pseudo-Fourth International, long accustomed to the dirtiest of factional tricks? Those sections associated with the former International Majority Tendency of Ernest Mandel were less virulent than the SWP in their attacks on the Morenoite-led Brigade, at most clucking their tongues at the FSLN-ordered repression. Thus the newspaper of the French LCR, *Rouge* (24-30 August), felt constrained to condemn the remarks of agrarian reform minister Wheelock, who in announcing the deportations launched a diatribe against "Trotskyism and all those who want to accelerate the evolution of the regime in Nicaragua." Of course, on the next page the editors published a friendly interview with the same Wheelock, remarking favorably on his revolutionary credentials.

As to the expulsions themselves, the LCR statement said only that "It is rather unlikely, whatever may be the political differences, that 60 foreigners could pose a real problem for a revolutionary leadership enjoying immense popular support." Supposedly, then, if leftists did pose a real threat to the Sandinista regime, the LCR would begin foaming at the mouth like the rabid SWP! By the next issue, *Rouge* (31 August-6 September) could only bring itself to complain that "the terms in which the Nicaraguan government decreed the expulsion of 'foreign' militants constitute a disturbing precedent." Finally, a resolution by the LCR central committee (published in the 7-13 September *Rouge*) screwed up its courage to utter the mildest of formal protests, declaring that the expulsions themselves "constitute an unacceptable precedent." Anyone counting on such "militant solidarity" to back him against anti-communist repression had better forget it.

But while *Rouge* was gradually escalating its adjectives from "disturbing" to "unacceptable," its man in Managua was taking a sharply different tack. According to the SWP's *Intercon-*



tinental Press (24 September), a USec delegation including LCR Latin American "expert" Jean-Pierre Beauvais (as well as Hugo Blanco, Peter Camejo, Barry Sheppard and others) handed a statement to the Sandinistas hailing "the revolutionary leadership of the FSLN" and declaring: "All activities which create divisions between the mobilized masses and the FSLN are contrary to the interests of the revolution." Dotting the i's and crossing the t's, it added: "This was the case specifically with the activities of the 'Simón Bolívar Brigade,'" which it termed "sectarian." And to top it off the USec delegation explicitly endorsed the expulsion:

"In a political and economic situation that required the greatest possible unity in struggle, the FSLN was right to demand that the non-Nicaraguan members of this group—which defined itself above all as a military organization—leave the country."

It is not reported whether Blanco/Camejo/Sheppard/Beauvais et al. received thirty pieces of silver, although they clearly hope to cash in on their perfidy by becoming the authorized cheerleaders for the FSLN. But the roots of such treachery are political and go back more than a quarter of a century, to the refusal of Michel Pablo, then secretary of the Fourth International, to defend the Chinese Trotskyists jailed by Mao. He called them "refugees from a revolution" for refusing to bow to the new bureaucratic rulers in Peking. For Pablo it was part of his liquidationist program that led to the destruction of the Fourth International as the organized world revolutionary vanguard. In the case of his epigones it is the consequence of their Pabloist policies, which lead all wings of the USec to chase after non-proletarian, anti-Marxist leaderships—from the Chinese Stalinists to Portuguese army officers and now the Sandinista nationalists....

Morenoite Charlatans and Adventurers

So what about the Simón Bolívar Brigade and its parent, Moreno's Bolshevik Faction. Certainly in comparison with the groveling betrayals of the SWP and the more shamefaced Mandeliste majority of the USec, the Moreno outfit might seem a militant alternative. A look at Moreno's chameleon-like political track record, his notoriety for underhanded financial

swindles and his ultra-reformist program in his home base, Argentina, will shatter this façade. And, indeed, the SWP is busily dredging up some of this material, filling the pages of *Intercontinental Press* with endless scandal stories about the disreputable adventurer Nahuel Moreno. No doubt Barnes and Mandel are getting ready to expel the troublemaker. But they are in no position to complain. For years they have coexisted in the same International (and in the case of the SWP, in the same faction) with this notorious snake-oil salesman, both after and during his worst betrayals. They have dirty hands.

When they are not echoing the Sandinista leaders' slanders that organizing workers around anti-capitalist demands is a "provocation," the SWP/USec charge that Moreno is an imposter traveling under false passports. According to the USec delegation statement, "to capitalize on the prestige of the FSLN," the Simón Bolívar Brigade "cloaked itself with the Sandinista banner." From news accounts of the August 15 Managua demonstration, it does seem that many of the protesters thought they were supporting a wing of the FSLN (although this does not lessen the significance of several thousand workers demonstrating against the government's pro-capitalist policies). But who do Barnes and Hansen think they are kidding? Their international "Nicaragua solidarity" campaign is intended precisely to drape the USec in Sandinista red-and-black, just as the SWP's Fair Play for Cuba Committee in the early '60s tried to capitalize on the popularity of Castroism. They just prefer to do it at long distance.

Besides, Moreno has a long history of impersonating other tendencies. He got his start in Argentina by pretending to be a left Peronist. In the late 1950s his review *Palabra Obrera* described itself as an "organ of revolutionary working-class Peronism" and carried on its masthead the slogan "under the discipline of General Perón and of the Peronist Supreme Council" (see "Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism," *WV* No. 24, 6 July 1973). When Peronism was no longer the rage, Moreno fused with a Castroite group and ran endless pictures of Che Guevara on the front pages of his papers. After a brief fling as a crypto-Maoist (hailing the Red Guards), he settled down to a more mundane existence as a social

democrat—and to this end fused with a wing of the historic Argentine Socialist Party, in order to capture its ballot slot. Not one to quibble about small change, Moreno promptly wrote a social-democratic program to correspond to the new label (see *Intercontinental Press*, 13 November 1972). Truly, Moreno is, as we have often described him, a political chameleon.

In a polemic against the Simón Bolívar Brigade, the Colombian Mandeliste PSR charges that the Morenoite undertaking was simply an adventure: "The brigade as such never entered combat. It could not have done so without adequate training and without being prepared to accept the discipline of the FSLN" (see *Intercontinental Press*, 17 September 1979). It does appear that for the most part Moreno's brigade, despite its bombastic propaganda, sat out the fighting in Costa Rica. In fact, its U.S.-based supporters, the Sandinistas for Socialism in Nicaragua, did not even leave for Managua until the day after Somoza's fall! So the heroic, gun-in-hand guerrilla image the Brigade leaders would like to assume (Colombian PST "*comandante*" Kemel George reportedly showed up in battle fatigues for a fund-raising rally in Bogotá) is certainly undeserved.

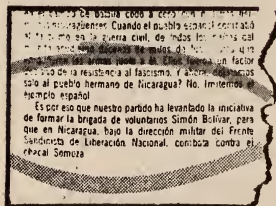
It is not true, however, that the Simón Bolívar Brigade was unprepared to "accept the discipline of the FSLN." Moreno's idea of "discipline" is probably not to the liking of the Sandinistas (or the USpc leaders), but the Brigade was definitely built on the basis of subordination to the FSLN. That makes its present situation all the more ironic. The "Open Letter" by the Morenoite Colombian PST to form the Brigade called for volunteers to go to Nicaragua to fight "under the military leadership" of the Sandinista Front; and it flaunted letters from FSLN leaders Edén Pastora ("Comandante Zero") and Plutarco Hernández Sánchez saying its members were "acting under the leadership of the General Staff" (see illustration). (The real content of the "military" posing, of course, has to be taken in light of the lack of combat activity by these Johnny-come-lately guerrillas.)

Politically, the Morenoites called for "a Sandinista government"—although for form's sake they tacked on that it should arise from supposed "organs of people's power" and be based on a program of "breaking with the bourgeoisie and imperialism" (*El Socialista*, 22 June). Such pious wishes aside, they

got their Sandinista government and—guess what—they get expelled from the country! That's what often happens when you tail after bonapartists. So the Simón Bolívar Brigade managed to acquire a militant image in spite of itself. As for its detractors in the Colombian PSR, they note that sending off the Brigade was essentially a gimmick rather than a real act of proletarian internationalism. That is true—genuine Trotskyists, had they the resources, would seek to build a communist nucleus among the urban workers rather than tagging along after Comandante Zero on the Southern Front. But what the PSR counterposes is not the struggle for an independent Trotskyist leadership in Nicaragua but inoffensive "solidarity" demonstrations in Bogotá. The difference between Morenoites and Mandelites is the difference between adventurers and cheerleaders, between con men and PR men.

The PSR polemic ended by touching on "the most sensitive point of all, the finances of the Simón Bolívar Brigade." Many people "have begun to have doubts about where the funds gathered by the PST are going," they report. And money is always the most sensitive point with Moreno. For those who know his past, the involuntary response upon learning that Colombian Morenoites were organizing an "international brigade" for Nicaragua was to say: "Nicaraguans, Colombians—keep your hands on your wallets!" But it hardly behooves the USpc to raise this charge now. The Argentine Política Obrera group has been complaining for years that Moreno's Editorial Pluma took 50,000 copies of Trotsky works on contract from them, deliberately held off paying for them for months until the March 1976 Videla coup, and then, pleading poverty, refused to pay.

Moreno's financial skulduggery is legendary in the Latin American left. The most sensationalist case concerns allegations that he failed to deliver promised funds to Hugo Blanco's guerrilla operation in Peru in 1962, and his role in the disappearance of several thousands of dollars taken in a bank expropriation by the Túpac Amaru group and destined for Blanco (for a detailed account of this affair, see Richard Gott, *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America* [1972]). In a review of Robert Alexander's grotesquely inaccurate book *Trotskyism in Latin America*, Joseph Hansen noted in 1977 that Moreno had never answered these



Open letter of Moreno's Colombian PST announcing formation of the Simón Bolívar Brigade "under the military leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front..." (*El Socialista*, 22 June 1979)

charges. But in view of the scandalous nature of the charges, it is notable that Hansen evidently never bothered to get an explanation from Moreno during the six years that they were co-leaders of the USec minority.

Moreno stands before the workers movement convicted many times over of political charlatanism and breaches of proletarian morality. Yet his operation is such that he frequently puts on a cover of programmatic militancy for purely factional purposes. On several occasions this has led the Morenoites to adopt positions imitating (or borrowed from?) the authentic Trotskyism of the international Spartacist tendency. Thus in polemicizing against an article on Eurocommunism and Soviet "dissidents" by Morenoite Eugenio Greco, SWP hack Gerry Foley noted that the "award for originality" in raising these positions belonged to "sectarians" such as the iSt (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 December 1977). And indeed, the Greco article (*Revista de América*, August 1977) does bear a notable resemblance to our own writings on the subject (except that, funny thing, the Morenoites identify Stalinism with dependence on Moscow gold).

In particular, in founding the Bolshevik Tendency after his break with the SWP in late 1975-early 1976, Moreno adopted positions on Portugal and Angola strikingly similar to those of the Spartacist tendency. On Portugal he denounced the SWP's tailing after the CIA-funded Socialist Party of Mario Soares as well as the Mandelite IMT's political support to the Stalinist/Armed Forces Movement bloc. On Angola he called for military support to the MPLA against the South African/CIA invasion while formally opposing political support to any of the three competing nationalist groups. The principal characteristic of these formally orthodox positions is that they are far from home and they are utterly arbitrary, not derived from a coherent programmatic worldview.

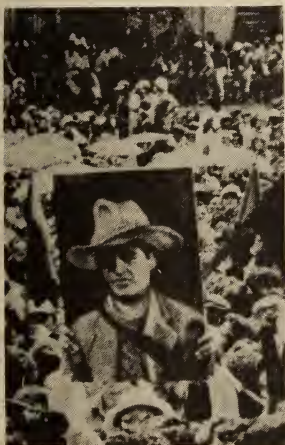
Thus, while Moreno condemns the SWP's shameless support for the Portuguese SP, in Argentina he fused with Juan Carlos Coral's rump social democrats in 1971. While criticizing Mandel's capitulation to the Eurocommunists, his Venezuelan supporters are now deeply embedded in the "Eurocommunist" MAS. While criticizing the IMT's support for the demagogic Carvalho and the Portuguese MFA, Moreno's Colombian PST called for "support to

the nationalist policies of Torrijos" in Panama, calling this demagogic military officer (friend of both Castro and Chase Manhattan Bank) "progressive" in his "confrontation with imperialism" (see "U.S. Out of Panama Now!" *WV* No. 203, 28 April 1978).

Feigning orthodoxy when it is "cheap"—in distant climes and when it suits his unprincipled maneuvers—close to home where it counts, Moreno's opportunism exceeds that of any other wing of the USec. Trenchantly criticizing Bolivian POR leader Guillermo Lora for joining an "anti-imperialist front" with General Torres in Bolivia in 1971 (*International Socialist Review*, February 1973), two years later Moreno himself joined a popular-front Group of 8 together with the Argentine CP and the leading bourgeois parties in pledging support to the bonapartist government of Juan Perón (see "PST Caught Redhanded," *WV* No. 49, 19 July 1974). Today when the Sandinistas are international celebrities, Moreno is a gung-ho guerrillaist; but when the Castroite PRT/ERP (then affiliated to the USec) was stirring things up in Argentina with its kidnappings and attacks on the army, Moreno's PST equated "the guerrillas and their mirror image—the terrorists of the AAA and other organizations of the ultraright" (*Intercontinental Press*, 28 October 1974).

Nahuel Moreno's record is that of a huckster who has put on the garb of virtually every popular trend in the Latin American left—Peronism, Castroism, Maoism, and now Sandinismo. His "left" positions on international topics bear no relation whatever to his rightist positions at home. The only reason he appears militant over Nicaragua today is that he was caught out in the middle of a maneuver with the FSLN—and that while he is up to his old tricks, the rest of the USec has moved disaffectedly to the right. Until the FSLN took power in Managua the Morenoites' call for a Sandinista government was formally to the right of the other tendencies of the USec, which raised various criticisms of the FSLN ties to the opposition bourgeoisie. But as soon as Mandel and Barnes smelled a chance to hook up to a popular cause, they leapt right over Moreno and left him holding the bag in the unaccustomed role of the far left wing.

Finally, it should be noted that in choosing the name Simón Bolívar Brigade Moreno chose a singularly appropriate sobriquet. Perhaps it was



intended to imitate the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War—although Bolívar, himself from a slaveholding landowner family, would be more appropriately compared to George Washington. But militarily the great hero of the wars of independence was a disaster in every way: he lost virtually every battle he fought, literally

dozens of them, repeatedly abandoning his troops in moments of adversity. His specialty, wrote Karl Marx in an article on Bolívar, was “triumphal entrances, manifestos and the proclamation of constitutions.” He was, said Marx in a letter to Engels, “the most cowardly, brutal and miserable scum.” So too Nahuel Moreno. ■

“OCI/ Moreno: Nicaragua Makes Strange Bedfellows”

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 242, 26 October 1979

As events in Nicaragua send the United Secretariat carousel madly whirling, the USec has spun off an unexpected liaison. Suddenly the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) of Pierre Lambert is making common cause with Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction (BF). Only yesterday it would have seemed to casual observers that Lambertists and Morenoites stood at opposite ends of the pseudo-Trotskyist spectrum, and never the twain would meet. The BF these days lays claim to the USec's left flank, while the OCI represents the closest thing to a chemically pure social-democratic parody of Trotskyism. Yet today they unite to praise the Simón Bolívar Brigade (BSB), recently expelled from Nicaragua by the victorious Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), and to denounce the “reconstituted” (but none too stable) USec majority led by Ernest Mandel and Jack Barnes. Today, but not tomorrow; for this most putrid of rotten blocs is likely to have the lifespan of a mosquito.

At a stormy meeting of the United Secretariat over the weekend of September 30 the USec adopted a series of motions which add up to total liquidation of an independent presence and political line in Nicaragua, in favor of complete subordination to the petty-bourgeois Sandinista Front. The Morenoite-led Bolívar Brigade was unequivocally condemned and the BF ordered to cease operating as a “public faction,” on pain of expulsion. A lengthy political resolution, “Nicaragua: Revolution on the March,” fulminates against a “headlong plunge into ultraleftism” and “adventuristically forcing the rhythm of the class struggle,” while labeling calls to break with the bourgeoisie a “sectarian temptation of applying an abstract schema” (*Intercontinental Press*, 22 October). It ends by calling on all USec supporters to act “as loyal militants of the organization which led the overthrow of Somoza”—

i.e., to dissolve their organizations, join the FSLN, shut up and take orders from the Sandinista leaders.

In response to this treachery, Moreno submitted a countermotion condemning the USec's scandalous refusal to express even elementary solidarity with its own “comrades” in the face of repression by the bourgeois Nicaraguan government. This Bolshevik Faction resolution “REJECT[S] these measures, which break all rules of democratic centralism,” and calls on militants to “prevent the holding of an anti-democratic world congress.” The threat to split before the USec's “11th World Congress,” scheduled for early November, was clear. In addition to Moreno's BF, members of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT) voted for this motion. (The LTT is a grouping of former supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction—led by the American Socialist Workers Party—who after the SWP's dissolution of the LTF in 1977 wanted to continue the factional struggle against the USec majority under Mandel, and have since politically aligned themselves *grosso modo* with the Lambertists.)

Immediately after the explosion in Brussels, representatives of the LTT and the BF held a private meeting with the leadership of the OCI, which then provocatively published this fact in its public newsletter (*Lettre d'Informations Ouvrières*, 10 October) along with various USec internal documents (“From a dossier given us by Comrade Moreno”). The newsletter politically endorses the Simón Bolívar Brigade and the BF as attempting to “aid the masses in developing their own organizations,” while the 6 October issue of the OCI's newspaper *Informations Ouvrières* announces that refusal to defend the BSB's right to stay in Nicaragua would be joining “the liquidators of the Fourth International” (in the previous month and a half the weekly *IO* had nothing to say on the subject). So the bloc is sealed,

at least for the purposes of a joint wrecking operation against the SWP and Mandel, while the OCI's previous attempts to join the United Secretariat have apparently been shelved for now. Lambert was angling to blow apart the USec, and now that a split is clearly in the offing, he has simply placed his money and picked his horse.

Left or Right on Nicaragua?

In the face of the SWP's outrageous support for Sandinista Front repression against the workers and its alliance with the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie" in a capitalist government, and in contrast to the Mandelites' more shamefaced and whimpering capitulation, it's very cheap for the Morenoite/Lambertist bloc to look left on Nicaragua. Thus the OCI wrote of the new FSLN-appointed regime:

"This bourgeois government, installed solely due to the conciliationist spirit of the Sandinista leaders... has received, for the accomplishment of its counterrevolutionary tasks, the support of imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy...."

—*Informations Ouvrières*, 8-23 August

Similarly, the Costa Rican Organización Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST), a USec sympathizing section which is linked with the LTT and directly tied to the French OCI, wrote in its newspaper *Qué Hacer?* (26 June-11 July) shortly before the fall of Somoza that the opposition by the FSLN's provisional government to immediate elections "clearly demonstrates its intentions of safeguarding the interests of the national bourgeoisie and imperialism..." (translated in *Intercontinental Press*, 1 October). In turn, the Colombian Morenoites of the Partido Socialista

of Castro is very clear; pay up!"

—*El Socialista*, 7 September

These are very left-sounding critiques of the currently popular Sandinista regime. But the real policies of the BF/BSB and the OCI/LTT are considerably to the right of their present posture, and moreover mutually sharply counterposed. In fact, before the FSLN took power on July 20 there was no basis whatever for Morenoites to unite with Lambertists in or over Nicaragua. As we have explained previously ("Revolution in Nicaragua and the Left," *WV* No. 240, 28 September), the Morenoites' present hostility to the FSLN is the pique of rejected suitors. Over the last year they have repeatedly called for a Sandinista government, later dressed up as "a government of the Front and of the workers and people's organizations" (*El Socialista*, 15 June) and similar formulas. But the FSLN, under the pressure of imperialism and "friendly" Latin American capitalist governments, and at the behest of Castro, preferred the company of industrialists and technocrats.

As for the Morenoite policies in the Simón Bolívar Brigade, they were even more opportunist (while also aggressively pressuring the FSLN tops, soon leading to their downfall). Sending an international brigade is a sometimes necessary and valiant tactic for communists in civil war situations; the participation of several dozen European Trotskyists in the POUM's Lenin Brigade during the Spanish Civil War, for instance, was principled and admirable. But since one can't expect to operate independently of an existing military leadership, it is *essential* to establish and defend the proletarian character of such a unit. The Bolívar Brigade was a parody of these principles. Its very name denies a working-class character, and the Morenoite "Open Letter" calling for its establishment says flatly, "the only programmatic point of the Simón Bolívar Brigade is to support the struggle of the Sandinista people..." (*El Socialista*, 22 June). In addition to the Morenoites' usual financial shady dealings—the Colombian PST, which organized the Brigade, raised money by selling bogus Sandino Bonds—they appealed to the Colombian government to "legally recognize the Simón Bolívar Brigade, guaranteeing its papers, transportation and financing."

But if Moreno & Co. tried to capitalize on enthusiasm for the Sandinista-led revolution against the hated tyrant Somoza, and their gim-



"Buy Sandino Bonds"

de los Trabajadores (PST) write that Latin American governments:

"...bought 'life insurance' for capitalism in Nicaragua with their intervention and support for the FSLN.... To sum up, the 'democratic' bourgeoisies have sent the bill to the FSLN; and the advice

mick simply blew up in their faces, at least they stood to the *left* of the petty-bourgeois nationalist FSLN. In contrast, the Costa Rican OST—and by extension its co-thinkers of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency—denounced the *Sandinista Front as criminally adventurist and ultra-leftist!* Their chief spokesman on Nicaragua is one Fausto Amador (brother of assassinated FSLN founder Carlos Fonseca Amador), who quit the Front some years ago as a demoralized element. In a pamphlet entitled *Adónde va Nicaragua* (Where Is Nicaragua Going?), published in February by the OST's Fausto Amador and Sara Santiago presented an analysis that was not only 100 percent wrong—it amounted to defeatist propaganda, in effect calling on the Nicaraguan masses to lay down their arms when the showdown with the dictator was almost underway:

"In Nicaragua, the second offensive was rapidly being converted into a myth which no one believed any more.... There will not be a second offensive. That is obvious for everyone, at least in the immediate future.... The lack of a second offensive would reveal the September [1978] action as an ill-fated adventure."

The OSI/LTF's "alternative"—peaceful demonstrations for democratic rights—was cretinist legalism in a country suffering under a bonapartist dictatorship (and, moreover, in the throes of a popularly supported insurgency). As we noted when the American SWP printed a similar piece by Amador and Santiago last June: "To present this social-democratic cowardice and demoralization as having anything to do with Marxism is just about the worst thing the SWP/USec could do to besmirch the name of Trotskyism before the Central American masses" (*WV* No. 234, 22 June). As for the OCI, its opposition to the new FSLN regime is based purely and simply on Stalinophobia—denouncing "the sudden resurrection of the moribund Nicaraguan Socialist Party (national branch office of the Kremlin)" and "the excessive weight of its members vis-à-vis the Sandinistas in the government" (*IO*, 8-23 August).

Portugal, Angola, Cuba...

We have dealt elsewhere with the stark contradiction between the abstract "leftism" of Moreno's Bolshevik Faction on Eurocommunism, the dictatorship of the proletariat or popular frontism in far-off Europe and his ultra-

opportunist practice in Latin America (political support to Perón, Torrijos, etc.). But what of its new bloc partners of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (and its mentors in the OCI)? In opposing the dissolution of the LTF in 1977 the future LTFers put forward a face of left-wing militancy: where the SWP called the Mandeliste majority ultraleftist, they said centrist; where Jack Barnes said the faction was formed to fight guerrillaism alone, they said it was also to fight popular frontism at home. But by the time it came to formulating a "Call for the Formation of an International Tendency" (*[SWP] International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, December 1978), the future LTF stood on the whole of "programmatic and political acquisitions" of the LTF, and in particular "the texts of the LTF on the Portuguese revolution and on Angola."

This statement definitively branded the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency as a *reformist* formation, and ignominious capitulators besides. For what did the LTF stand for in Portugal and Angola? At the height of the 1975 polarization in Portugal, when Lisbon workers were taking over factories, the LTF called for a purely "democratic" program of defense of the constituent assembly (at the time the battle cry of the right). As the Socialist Party of Mário Soares was leading a mass anti-Communist mobilization which was burning down CP offices, the SWP proclaimed that the "real vanguard of the Portuguese working class... participated in the SP demonstrations" (*Militant*, 8 August 1975). And the OCI called for a "Soares Government" (*Informations Ouvrières*, 23 July-6 August 1975). Moreno broke from the SWP and split the LTF precisely over this issue, while the future LTFers were at first even harder in condemning the SWP's tailing after Soares (only to capitulate a few weeks later and vote for the LTF's "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" resolution).

For principled Marxist differences of the magnitude that divided the Morenoites and Lambertists over Portugal would make unity *impossible*: like the SWP and Mandel, they would have been facing each other on opposite sides of the barricades in Lisbon. The same on Angola, where at the height of the fighting between the South African-led, CIA-financed imperialist drive on Luanda, the SWP/LTF *refused to take*



Pierre Lambert

WV Photo

sides for the military victory of the Soviet-backed MPLA. (Later they tried to disguise this vile betrayal by some heavy-handed "editing" of a January 1976 SWP national committee statement.) Moreno denounced this in the most violent terms, publishing a whole book on the subject (*Angola: La revolución negra en marcha* [1977]) where he said that, "the best way to aid Vorster and Yankee imperialism was to say what the SWP said...." So how does Moreno feel about uniting today with people who consider the SWP/LTF's stand "historic"?

And Cuba? On Cuba, the LTT supports "the general line of D. Keil's contributions," while three leaders of the Costa Rican OST (Andrés, Rodrigo and Sara) signed together with Keil a document labeling the Castro regime a "bureaucratized workers state" ("For a Change in the Fourth International's Position on Cuba," [SWP] *IIDB*, December 1978). Again, at first glance this might seem a move to the left from the USec's political support to the "unconscious Trotskyist" Fidel (now taken to new lengths by the SWP's latest panegyrics to Castro, the champion of peace and friend of the world's children). But as we pointed out in our article, "For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba!" (*WV* No. 224, 2 February 1979), Keil et al. were attacking the SWP "from the right, arguing in effect for a consistently social-democratic position of opposing all Stalinist regimes." We summed up: "Add up the SWP/LTF positions on China, Vietnam, Portugal and Angola and throw in a deformed workers state position on Cuba and what do you get? A fleshed-out program of Stalinophobia." The LTT/OST's openly counterrevolutionary positions on Nicaragua, calling the Sandinistas' victorious "second offensive" an "adventure" are a vivid confirmation of our earlier conclusion.

...And the Strange Case of Fausto Amador

These questions—the most basic issues of revolutionary perspective in key recent events—are but the small change in the horse-trading combinations and recombinations of USec factional struggles. There is a basis of sorts for the Morenoite/Lambertist bloc; both are deeply reformist while appearing left today on Nicaragua. Besides there is the attractive bait that the OCL recently broke with Moreno's long-standing opponents in the Argen-

tine Política Obrera group (enemy of my enemy makes you my friend, etc.). But there are a few sticky points, even for these consummate opportunists. And one of these is the case of Fausto Amador, already introduced to our readers.

For F. Amador did not simply break from the FSLN. He was interviewed on Somoza's television and spoke to Somoza's press, where he urged other members of the guerrilla organization to lay down their arms in return for promises of amnesty by the blood-soaked dynastic dictatorship. For this the FSLN leaders rightly considered him a traitor. Later, as a Nicaraguan cultural attaché in Brussels—i.e., an employee of Somoza—he was reportedly won to the USec's perversion of Trotskyism. Naturally this caused a certain commotion in Central America, where the case was well-known. Moreno picked this up and was the first to make it an issue in the USec. At a December 1977 meeting of the central committee of the Colombian PST, Bolshevik faction leader Eugenio Greco complained:

"Do you know the name they give in Europe to what Fausto Amador did. It was called collaborationism.... If a very probable combination of circumstances occurs: that Somoza falls; that the Frente Sandinista emerges as a movement of great prestige because of its antidictatorial struggle.... the Frente Sandinista might say: I would like the Fourth International to explain why Fausto Amador Arrieta is in its ranks...and, gentlemen, at that moment Trotskyism will be finished in Central America."

—[SWP] *IIDB*, April 1978

And so it came to pass. But today the notorious Fausto Amador, a leader of the Costa Rican OST, is defended by the LTT and its new allies of Moreno & Co. The BF countermove at the September 30 USec meeting explicitly defends Amador against his accusers, "a petty-bourgeois leadership foreign to the Trotskyist movement." Attacks on the personal integrity of political leaders are the bane of the Latin American left, where most splits focus on accusations of stolen money or cowardice and betrayal. In the case of Fausto Amador the charges are essentially proven by his own admission; and yet he remains a recognized leader of the USec. What is destroyed by this fact is not Trotskyism, however, but the revolutionary pretensions of these renegades from Marxism for whom Fausto Amador's hands are only a little dirtier than all the rest. ■

Moreno in Argentina, I:

From Left Peronism to Social Democracy

The Moreno Group and "Left"-Peronism

excerpted from:

"Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 24, 6 July 1973

The largest group in Argentina claiming to support Trotskyism is the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) led by Nahuel Moreno. Moreno's tendency has existed since the late 1940's, and at least since 1952 has exhibited the fundamental characteristics of Pabloism in a classic form. Pablo abandoned the struggle for the creation of independent Trotskyist parties; in the early 1950's he concocted the objectivist theory that Stalinism would be "forced" to take revolutionary measures and thus revolutionaries should bury themselves in the dominant workers parties. In Latin America this revisionism was carried to a "higher" level when Pablo ordered the Bolivian POR into the petty-bourgeois nationalist MNR, which was in no way a workers party.

In Argentina the Moreno group had opposed Peronism until 1952 but then rejected this position as "sectarian." After that "we considered ourselves a 'de facto' party of the anti-Yankee front of Peronism" (quote of an "apologist for Moreno" in *Workers Press*, 14 April 1972). According to the same source, "our innovation was that for the first time a Marxist group entered a bourgeois party." Immersion in this bourgeois party lasted for the next twelve years!

After the "Liberating Revolution" of 1955 Moreno formed the Movimiento de Agrupaciones Obreras (MAO—Movement of Workers Groupings) and put out the magazine *Palabra Obrera*, which referred to itself as the "organ of revolutionary workers' Peronism" issued "under the discipline of General Perón and the Peronist Supreme Council!"

In the 1958 elections *Palabra Obrera*, while initially opposing a vote for the bourgeois Radical Frondizi,

eventually decided to "save the activist unity" by calling for a "vote for the gorila Frondizi" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 9 May 1973). During this same period the Moreno group was particularly associated with a group of left-Peronist leaders of the "62 organizations" (the most prominent being Loholaberry) who had won influence during the resistance following the 1955 coup. A few years later the same Loholaberry was directly collaborating with the brutal anti-labor Onganía dictatorship.

After 1964, when *Palabra Obrera* fused with the Castroite FRIP group, Moreno switched allegiances and took on guerrillaist feathers (see "Guevarism vs. Social Democracy in the USec," *WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973). While achieving some influence as a result of mass work with Tucumán sugar workers, again in alliance with the "peronistas combativos" of the FOTIA leadership, the Moreno group did not itself undertake guerilla warfare. When some of the members began pushing to implement the program, Moreno split.

The trade-union work of the Moreno group has had a consistent syndicalist character, refusing to politicize the spontaneous struggles of the class. In the general strikes of late 1970 it called for an unlimited general strike for an immediate pay increase, end to the state of siege and recognition of all political parties, and for the formation of factory assemblies to lead the strike (*La Verdad*, 10 November 1970). It did not call for a workers government nor did it advocate the formation of a national strike committee to lead the mobilization. Similarly, the PST (then PSA) call for a workers' slate in the last elections did not raise any programmatic criteria! Its appeals were directed to locally prominent militants connected with the CP, left-Peronists or syndicalists, and the main demand was for a slate with 80 percent workers with an unspecified "workers' program."

Since the March elections, the fall-

ure to present a clear alternative to the Peronists has become actively dangerous. In late May the PST attended a meeting with Cámpora which, according to the PST itself, "was a great meeting of the parties and organizations of the Argentine bosses to give their support to Cámpora's proposals." The PST's position was that all the government's acts which develop toward the workers'

interests would be given critical support. "Without confusing the banners, Dr. Cámpora can count on our proletarian solidarity" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 30 May-6 June 1973). Cámpora-Perón begin gearing up for a crackdown on the "Trotskyists" and PST leader Juan Carlos Coral promises the PST's critical support for the positive measures of the Cámpora government!...

The "Trotskyists" II: The PST and the Social-Democratic Swamp

Thus the "Trotskyist-Castroite" theories of the PRT/ERP guerillaists have nothing in common with authentic Trotskyism. In the USec faction fight, the opposition to the PRT radical terrorists and their European USec supporters is led by the reformist U.S. SWP, which is backing the Argentine PST of Nahuel Moreno, pseudo-Trotskyist café revolutionary *sui generis*, and until 1969 the leading spokesman of the USec in Latin America. Although the SWP-Moreno wing now seeks to pose as principled defenders of orthodox Trotskyism against Castroite guerillism, the basis of their opposition to the Mandel-Frank-Maitan tendency epitomized by the PRT/ERP is *from the right*, proceeding from an appetite for direct reformist collaboration with their own bourgeoisies.

This can be illustrated by examining Moreno's own history and his current positions on Argentina. In 1961 Moreno wrote:

"Of course, life has brought out the gaps, omissions and errors of the program of Permanent Revolution.... The dogma that only the working class can accomplish the democratic tasks is false. Sectors of the urban middle class and the peasantry are, on occasion, the revolutionary leadership.... History... has rejected the theory that the proletariat, in the backward countries, is the revolutionary leadership.... Mao Tse-tungism, or the theory of guerrilla war, is the particular reflection in the field of theory of the actual stage of world revolution.... [It is necessary to] synthesize the correct general theory and program (Trotskyist) with the correct particular theory and program (Mao Tse-tungist or Castroist).... [The state] conserves relative autonomy and can maneuver between distinct social classes.... There are revolutionary democratic dictatorships (based on the

peasantry, the people and the proletariat)."

—N. Moreno, *La revolución latinoamericana*, 1961

This is simply an earlier incarnation of the ideology of the PRT/ERP: the revolutionary role of the peasantry, the bankruptcy of the program of permanent revolution, the theory of new democracy—it is all there, perhaps even a bit more crudely worded. It was on the basis of these theories that the Moreno group, which until then had been deeply buried in the Peronist movement—issuing its magazine *Palabra Obrera* "under the discipline of General Perón and of the Peronist Supreme Command"—fused with a petty-bourgeois Castroite group (the FRIP), which had been active among Tucuman sugar workers, in 1964 to form the PRT, official section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International."

During the period 1964-68 the PRT continued to follow these guerillaist policies, and without a single word of protest from USec leaders. It would doubtless still be doing so today if some of the well-meaning but naive militants of the PRT had not decided to put Moreno's words into practice, calling for the transition to armed struggle in the north. For a time Moreno went along with the drift, going so far as to announce that "today OLAS [Castro's guerilla "International"], with its national combat organizations for armed struggle, is the only organizational vehicle for power" (N. Moreno, "La revolución latinoamericana, Argentina y nuestras tareas," *Estrategia* No. 7, September 1968):

But "armed struggle" has a way of becoming dangerous, so when it was clear that a sizeable portion of the PRT was actually headed toward the formation of a "guerilla army," Moreno split the party (1968). Until late 1971 the Moreno group retained the name of

excerpted from:

"Guevarism vs. Social Democracy in the USec"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 23, 22 June 1973



Moreno's press in the '50s: *Palabra Obrera*, "Organ of Revolutionary Workers Peronism—Under the Discipline of Gen. Perón and the Peronist High Council"

the PRT and of its newspaper (*La Verdad*), while the guerrillaists led by Carlos Ramirez became known by the title of their organ (*Combatiente*). However, having already exhausted the policies of deep immersion in Peronism and Castroism, Moreno, sensing a possibility of participating in the elections as a respectable left party (all communist parties are banned in Argentina, and have been both under Perón and the military), began sniffing around for a new swamp in which to bury the PRT (*Verdad*). This was promptly found in the shape of a wing of the old Partido Socialista Argentino (PSA—Argentine Socialist Party, affiliated with the Second International) led by Juan Carlos Coral. The formalities of a common program were tidily dealt with in the form of "Basis of Unification" which has been described by Joseph Hansen and his co-thinkers as "constituting essentially of a summary of Trotskyist positions based on the theory of permanent revolution" (*Argentina and Bolivia—The Balance Sheet*, 1973).

Let us see what the permanent revolution sounds like in the mouths of these social democrats. In the first place, it seems that the party must "tirelessly struggle to bring about a workers and people's government that will assure national liberation and the revolutionary construction of socialism." This is simple enough: if Trotskyism calls for a workers government to achieve socialism, and Stalinism calls for a people's government to achieve national liberation—then just combine the two for the best of all possible worlds! Sixty years of struggle between Stalinism and Trotskyism, the murder of tens of thousands of Left Oppositionists, the strangling of the Chinese, German, French, Spanish and Vietnamese revolutions—these are but mere trifles when respectability can be achieved through painless fusion with social democracy!

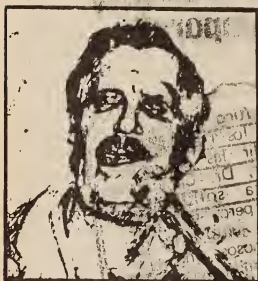
And what about internationalism? What of the Fourth International, in particular? It seems that "while recognizing the need for an International," the PSA will not "yield [its] inalienable right to determine strategy and tactics to any leadership or tendency that is not rooted in the proletariat and the Argentine people." And what about the program? As good reformists, the PSA has two: the minimum and maximum programs, which appear in one set of "demands for immediate struggle" and another set for "struggle on a permanent basis" (i.e., socialism). One of

the more interesting immediate demands is "for an end to the repressive role of the armed forces and their use in the service of capital.... For the constitutional right of soldiers and officers to take part in politics" [our emphasis]. The PSA envisions reforming the very essence of the capitalist state, thereby avoiding mentioning touchy subjects like armed struggle, workers militias, etc.

Moreno elsewhere referred to this opportunist swamp as "95 percent Trotskyist." Perhaps he can help us to find the five percent. Is it in the "workers and people's government"? In the refusal to recognize the authority of any International which is "not rooted in... the Argentine people"? Or perhaps it is the maximum-minimum program, a hallmark of reformism? Is it the "end to the repressive role of the armed forces" under capitalism? Or the refusal to say *one word* about armed struggle in a country which has been in a pre-revolutionary situation for four years?

Having achieved the necessary respectable cover, the "revitalized" "95 percent Trotskyist" PSA (now renamed the PST) proceeded to throw its total energies into the election campaign. At a time when even the PST characterized the situation as "pre-revolutionary," this exclusively electoral approach can only be called classical parliamentary cretinism. Moreover, instead of running on its own program the PST devised a new tactic, the "workers pole." "Take advantage of our legal status," it declared, offering to put any bona fide worker on its slate. Are you left-Peronist, pro-CP, syndicalist? Never mind, we can all get together in a single slate and, who knows, perhaps one day we can all be part of one great party of the whole class, the kind Kautsky built, the social democracy.

Unfortunately, this is still very "small potatoes" and it still leaves the mass of the working class under the control of Peronism. Instead of calling on the workers to break from Peronism (how crude and sectarian!), the PSA offered to vote for the Justicialista candidates if the FREJULI ticket was made up of at least 80 percent workers, instead of just 25 percent (*Avanzada Socialista*, 22 November 1972). In response to Perón's return last November, the PST newspaper's front page banner headline read: "Why is Perón Coming? Hopefully it will be to impose fighting workers candidates and not to make deals with the oligarchy" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 8 November 1972):



Nahuel Moreno

To believe the words of Moreno and his group, one could only conclude that Trotskyism and the whole science of Marxism simply amount to the method of finding the highest bidder to sell out to. In a country where Peronism, a bourgeois movement, is dominant in the working class, it is necessary to pose a sharp class alternative to populism, not offer to vote for it if 80 percent of its candidates are labor bureaucrats! To break the workers from Perón,

revolutionary communists can propose a class united front, even to the traitorous leadership of the CGT; we can demand the formation of a labor party with a class-struggle program; we can demand general strikes to impose the urgent demands of the workers. But a working-class united front against the bourgeoisie can never be achieved by making a bloc (open or secret, it makes no difference) with the leading bourgeois politician, General Perón!...

Build a Legal, Centrist, Bourgeois Party?

Eso es lo que explica que, en el momento actual, seamos el polo de atracción de los grupos de izquierda estudiantil y de la vanguardia obrera.

El Partido Socialista de la Revolución Nacional no es más que una etapa en la formación del partido centrista de izquierda legal, nuestro principal objetivo político-organizativo en el actual momento. En ese sentido debemos buscar una solución. El Partido Socialista de la Revolución Nacional debe transformarse en una corriente centrista de izquierda a corto plazo, o debemos buscar otro acuerdo o unión que cree esa organización.

Esa organización política legal centrista de izquierda es progresiva fundamentalmente por su legalidad y su carácter nacional. Sabemos conscientemente que esa organización es lo opuesto de una proletaria bolchevique, y que nuestra tendencia, por medio de ella y luchando en ella

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"The Socialist Party of National Revolution is no more than a stage in the formation of a legal, left centrist party, our main political-organizational objective at this time...."

"This left centrist, legal political organization is progressive fundamentally because of its legality and its national character. We are consciously aware that this organization is the opposite of a proletarian Bolshevik organization...."

—from Nahuel Moreno, 1954: año clave del peronismo

80 Percent Working-Class Peronism?

Esa lista obrera debe formarse en base a los compañeros más luchadores, que han actuado al frente de las peleas contra el hambre, la miseria y los atropellos de la patronal y el régimen. A los luchadores peronistas les hemos dicho que traten de lograr un 80 % de candidatos obreros elegidos por la base, dentro del justicialismo y que, en ese caso, los apoyaremos. Nos hemos ofrecido a acompañar a los compañeros peronistas a venir a Perón.

"Proletarian Solidarity" with Campora?

regua.
el apoyo crítico del Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores. Sin confundir las banderas, podrá contar, Dr. Campora, con nuestra solidaridad proletaria, pero no para agregar firmas junto a las de aliados sospechosos, sino para sumar nuestra militancia en la lucha cotidiana, que desarrollan las masas revolucionariamente movilizadas a partir del Cordobazo.

"... We have told the Peronist fighters to try to achieve [a slate of] 80 percent workers candidates elected by the rank and file of justicialismo [the Peronist party FREJULI] and that, in that case—we will support them."

"... Without confusing banners, Dr. Campora will be able to count on our proletarian solidarity...."

—from Avanzada Socialista, 22 November 1972

—from Avanzada Socialista, 30 May-6 June 1973

A Workers and People's Government?

II
 Por la plena vigencia de las libertades democráticas
 Fuera los militares del poder
 Asamblea Constituyente, convocada bajo control de
 los trabajadores, que designe un
 Gobierno Provisional Obrero y Popular



"For full implementation of democratic rights
 Military out of the government
 For a Constituent Assembly, called under the control
 of the workers, to designate
 a Provisional Workers and People's Government"

La Internacional

Reconociendo la necesidad de una
 Internacional, el Partido no abdica de su
 inalienable derecho a determinar sus estrategias y
 tácticas a dirección alguna que no emane de las
 entrañas del proletariado y del pueblo argentino.

SOBRE LAS BASES ENUNCIADAS, EL PARTIDO SOCIALISTA DE LA ARGENTINA A LUCHAR

VI

Por la democratización de las Fuerzas Armadas

- Por la supresión del rol represivo de las Fuerzas Armadas y su utilización al servicio de los intereses del capital.
- Por la reducción del presupuesto militar a tres meaos

the workers and their organizations,
 parties and unions.

That, while recognizing the need for
 an International, neither of the execu-
 tive committees, nor the party, will
 yield their inalienable right to deter-
 mine strategy and tactics to any lead-
 ership or tendency that is not rooted
 in the proletariat and the Argentine
 people.

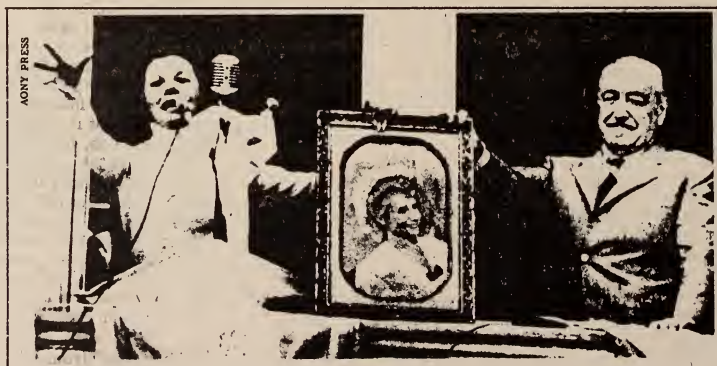
That on the basis of these points,
 both executive committees are devot-
 ing themselves to the task of

VI. For the democratization of the
 armed forces.

For an end to the repressive role
 of the armed forces and their use in
 the service of capital.

—from "Programa del Partido Socialista de
 Argentina," 24 November 1972

—from "Basis of Unification of the PSA-PRT,"
 Intercontinental Press, 13 November 1972



Peron's wife Isabelita (Maria Estela) with Hector Campora and picture of Eva, Peron's first wife.

III.

Moreno in Argentina, II: Back to Peronism

Pact with Perón for "Law and Order"

In recent months rightist terror in Argentina has mounted sharply. This is seldom reported in the bourgeois media, which prefer to dwell on kidnappings carried out by leftist guerrillas. However, in addition to the police "coup" in the interior industrial city of Córdoba during February, there have been a series of shootings, raids, suppressions of newspapers and other arbitrary acts directed against left-Peronist and socialist organizations.

Earlier this year General Perón closed down the left-Peronist newspapers *El Descamisado* and *El Mundo*. Offices of the pro-Moscow Communist Party, of the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR), of the UJS (Union of Youth for Socialism, youth group of *Política Obrera*) and of the PST (Socialist Workers Party) and its youth group, the AJS (Vanguard Socialist Youth), have all been raided by the police. Left-wing union offices have been dynamited and attacked with machine guns by bureaucratic goons. And in May three militants of the PST, who had been kidnapped from the office of their party in a Buenos Aires suburb, were murdered by a gang of 15 rightist thugs. Now, with the death of "El Líder" (Perón) on June 30, this wave of atrocities will undoubtedly accelerate.

Under such circumstances, faced with a wave of rightist terror which has tacit backing and often direct participation by the police and army, it is an elementary necessity of the class struggle to call for united actions in defense of the left, with the participation of all socialist organizations as well as left-Peronist union and youth organizations. Such actions would include united demonstrations, armed pickets to defend strikes and the offices of leftist organizations, and the eventual formation of a united workers militia based on the unions. These united-front ac-

tions would in no way compromise the necessary political independence of the various organizations participating.

However, in a display of panic typical of the frenzied petty bourgeoisie, the Argentine PST (a sympathizing organization of the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International") has gone a very different path—toward a political bloc with the Stalinists and bourgeois liberal and populist parties, in defense of the "institutionalization" of bourgeois legality. This craven capitulation was vividly expressed in a joint declaration by six bourgeois parties, the CP and the PST in an audience with General Perón at his residence, "Olivos," on March 21. The declaration promises to adhere to "the institutional process" (i.e., capitalist law-and-order), condemns all those (such as communists) who seek to change this process, and calls for united action (together with the Radicals and Peronists) against imperialism!

This preposterous "Declaration of the 8" is undoubtedly one of the greatest atrocities perpetrated by an ostensibly Trotskyist organization since the Ceylonese LSSP joined a popular-front government in 1964. In addition to implying that the very bourgeois forces which murdered PST militants and deposed the left-Peronist Córdoba government can "institutionalize" democracy and fight imperialism, the Olivos declaration is, in fact, a forerunner to a popular front.

We do not have in our possession a copy of the original statement, but the excerpts from it printed in *Política Obrera* (30 March) are more than adequate for an exact appreciation of its character. The PST now claims, in the 26 June issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, that it never signed the document apparently because it couldn't get a good enough "deal" from the bourgeois parties and the Stalinists on the wording (see *Intercontinental Press*, 15 July). However, at most this can only have to do with a formal signature, since the

"PST Caught Redhanded"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 49, 19 July 1974

PST very definitely did participate in the Olivos meeting (we print a picture of the PST's ubiquitous Juan Carlos Coral along with the rest of the eight at the audience with Perón) whose purpose was to present the declaration to the president. In any case, it is, to say the least, unusual that *Avanzada Socialista* reported the PST as having signed the declaration in its edition of 28 March. Despite the vehement public attack by the Polifca Obrera group on the PST because of this act AS did not see fit to publish a "rectification" of its "editorial error" until three months later!

In the text presented to Perón by the eight parties we read that the participants in the Olivos meeting support "in all instances the institutional process and, at the same time, condemn all those who in one way or another attempt to change it." In the first place the reader notes repeated references to "institutionalization," "the institutional process" and the like. Evidently even the double-talking PST has trouble speaking of bourgeois democracy in Perón's Argentina! And secondly, whom exactly does the declaration condemn? No doubt the "ultrarightists." But, then, not only the right-wing Peronist thugs and fascists wish to change the institutional process of bourgeois democracy—so, too, would any self-respecting Marxist.

As for the tasks ahead, the PST has something quite different from proletarian revolution in mind. According to the declaration:

"The difficult moments which await the Republic, as a consequence of its confrontation with the powers which have subjected it from long ago, can be overcome victoriously with solidarity in action of the sectors which respect the majority and popular will for liberation [as] expressed in the elections..."

"The realization of a true federalism of the national community, Latin American integration, solidarity with the subjected peoples of the world and the fight against imperialism and the oligarchy can be materialized only with the creative agreements [coincidencias] which grow out of the full exercise of democracy in all areas..."

After piercing through the byzantine rhetoric, the only possible meaning one can get from this passage is that the Peronists, Radicals and other liberal/populist capitalist parties, together with the CP and PST, can fight against imperialism and the oligarchy... provided, of course, they achieve those "creative agreements" which result from bourgeois democracy!

Such an open rejection of the Marxist principle of working-class independence from the bourgeoisie, the implicit belief that the bourgeoisie can fight against imperialism (and therefore that Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is false), and the explicit agreement to abide by the rules of the "institutional process" (not even bourgeois democracy!)—even for the unprincipled USec, such a document is a little extreme. Yet to date, no section of the "Trotskyist" United Secretariat has publicly stated its disagreement!

The USec majority has reportedly sent an internal letter to its sections in which it demands that the PST clarify its position on the document, or else be expelled. This is only natural, since the PST sides with the reformist USec minority led by the SWP. What better way to get at the SWP than to saddle it with this betrayal by its Argentine cothinkers? But what of the militant workers in Argentina itself, who have at least two organizations sympathizing with the United Secretariat to choose from (the PST and the "Red Faction" of the ERP/PRT)? Certainly they might be interested to know where the "Fourth International" stands on this important issue. Not to mention would-be Trotskyists around the world.

As for the SWP, it is prepared to denounce kidnappings of U.S. businessmen carried out by the ERP/PRT, at the time the official Argentine section of the USec, within hours of their occurrence. Yet it took the weekly 40-page-plus *Intercontinental Press* a quarter of a year to even mention the Olivos declaration.

The Spartacist League denounces the declaration by the Argentine PST (Socialist Workers Party), Communist Party and six bourgeois liberal and populist parties as an obscene reformist capitulation. Whether or not the Coral/Moreno leadership of the PST may have had reservations or disagreements at the time (or quite likely only now, after receiving a letter from some unnamed "European compañero" asking for "clarification"), they cannot deny that they were prepared in principle to enter a bloc for law and order with the bourgeoisie. The PST is revealed as an enemy of the workers!

We have in the past denounced similar betrayals by the PST as when, at a similar meeting between the Peronist President-elect Cámpora the bourgeois parties and CP, Juan Carlos Coral stated the PST's support for the "posi-



Juan Carlos Coral

tive measures" of the new government and declared his "proletarian solidarity" with Cámpora ("Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism," *WV* No. 24, 6 July 1973). Like the scandalous Olivos declaration, this "critical support" for a bourgeois government has never been denounced in the public press of the United Secretariat. No doubt, however, after Mandel has

squeezed the last drop of factional advantage from the affair, and the PST is duly expelled or walks out of the USec, he will then turn around and write one of those lucid explanations of his ex-affiliates' betrayals (his article on the Ceylonese LSSP is a model) in which he denounces everything... except his own, and the USec's, culpability in the betrayal. ■

Institutionalization: Now and Forever

DOCUMENTS

'Institutionalization' and Rightist Threat

[The following article is from the July 4 issue of *Avanzada Socialista*, the weekly paper of the Argentine PST (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing group of the Fourth International). The translation is by Intercontinental Press.]

Our party is the only militant left party in Argentina that has publicly stated that it supports the "process of institutionalization." In line with this, it was the only working-class and socialist current that, in order to participate in this process, did the work necessary to gain the status of a legal party and intervene in the elections.

In October 1972, representatives of our party went to meet with the representative of the military dictatorship to tell him that we supported the "process

of institutionalization" and to demand the withdrawal of the military junta from the government. More recently, in the case of the coup by Navarro in Córdoba, we met with the Peronist government. And, along with reiterating our opposition to military dictatorship, we called for a series of measures such as the repudiation of the Social Pact, democratization of the unions, and expropriation of the oligarchy and the imperialists.

These are the same demands we make today, when once again, in the aftermath of General Perón's death, we have reiterated our support for the "process of institutionalization" against the attacks of the putschist right.

What is the meaning of this process that we find ourselves supporting together with bourgeois political forces?

In Argentine politics, the term "pro-

Intercontinental Press

Did They or Didn't They: Three Months Later

¿Cómo que los autores de la resolución del Secretariado Unificado sacaron la impresión opuesta?

Reconocemos que parte de la culpa recae sobre nosotros. *Avanzada Socialista* publicó el texto del supuesto documento conjunto en su edición del 28 de marzo-5 de abril, con una lista de supuestos firmantes. Se trata de un error del que nos hacemos responsables, así como de la demora en corregirlo. Pero el camarada Coral lo rectificó públicamente el 8 de mayo en una entrevista por televisión que tuvo difusión nacional, y el consejo editorial de *Avanzada Socialista* hizo lo mismo en la edición del 26 de junio.¹

1. El texto en español apareció en *Intercontinental Press* el 22 de julio.

—from "En Defensa del PST y la Verdad," statement by Executive Committee of the PST, 20 August 1974, in *Intercontinental Press*, 16 September 1974

—from "In Defense of the PST and the Truth," statement by Executive Committee of the PST, 20 August 1974, translated in *Intercontinental Press*, 9 September 1974

How then did the authors of the United Secretariat resolution gain a contrary impression?

We acknowledge that we are partly to blame for this. *Avanzada Socialista* did publish the text of the supposed common document in the March 28-April 5 issue. Moreover, it included a list of supposed signers. This was an error—along with the delay in correcting it—for which we take responsibility. Comrade Coral did make a public correction on May 8 in a television interview. A public rectification was also made by the editorial staff of *Avanzada Socialista* in the June 26 issue.¹

1. For the Spanish text see *Intercontinental Press*, July 22, page 1002. An

Política Obrera



PST's Coral (third from right) at presentation of "Declaration of 8" to Perón (third from left).

What's in a Word

los derechos democráticos. Puesto que se nos ha llamado la atención sobre el particular, lo estamos estudiando. Llamamos a todos los sectores del movimiento trotskista a considerar también esta cuestión, teniendo en cuenta la situación concreta de la Argentina, incluyendo el significado que ha adquirido la palabra "institucionalización".²

Si es necesaria una reacción,

2. Las palabras "institucionalización" y "proceso de institucionalización" han adquirido un significado especial en la política actual argentina.

logía política año 1949, durante su primer gobierno. "Institucionalización" de la política actual argentina.

En Argentina, las fuerzas reaccionarias tratan de revertir el "proceso de institucionalización". Es por eso que este punto ha pasado a ser uno de los problemas más importantes de la lucha de clases en ese país. — IP

of democratic rights. Since our attention has been called to this, we have begun discussing the matter. We appeal to other sectors of the Trotskyist movement to also consider this question, bearing in mind the concrete situation in Argentina, including the meaning acquired by the word "institucionalización."²

If an adjustment is called for in the revolutionary

2. "Institutionalization" and the "process of institutionalization" have acquired a special meaning in current Argentine politics.

In 1949, during his first regime, Perón

Argentine politics as "institutionalizing" equal rights for women. In Argentina, reactionary forces are seeking to reverse the "process of institutionalization." Thus the issue has become an acute one in the class struggle there. — IP

—from "En Defensa del PST y la Verdad," Ibid.

If You Believe This...

que Corral y, además, que todo el programa fue un alegato contra el frente popular.

Por nuestra parte queremos aclarar que el error de *Avanzada Socialista* se debió a la siguiente confusión: uno de los ocho partidos propuso que se hiciera una declaración conjunta y presentó un proyecto. Nuestro partido propuso una serie de cambios que fueron parcialmente aceptados. Nuestra redacción creyó, en el momento de cerrar nuestra edición, que el documento llevaba la firma del *Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores*. En realidad, no había sido firmado por subsistir todavía diferencias.

Cumplimos en consignar el error de esta redacción con respecto a la firma del documento. □

Corral's public denial, and also the fact that the entire program argued the case against popular frontism.

For our part we want to make clear how *Avanzada Socialista* happened to make the error. It resulted from the following sequence: One of the eight parties proposed that a joint declaration be made, and it presented a draft. Our party proposed a series of changes that were partially accepted. At the time we went to press, the editorial staff thought that the document bore the signature of the *Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores*. Actually, it was not signed because there was still disagreement with it.

We on the editorial staff complete the record by indicating how the error was made with regard to the signature. □

—from "El PST No Firmo Declaracion de los 8," *Avanzada Socialista*, 26 June 1974, in Intercontinental Press, 22 July 1974

—from "No PST Signature on Statement Handed to Perón," *Avanzada Socialista*, 26 June 1974, translated in Intercontinental Press, 15 July 1974

The wave of rightist terror which engulfed Argentina following the death of President Juan Perón last July 1 has resulted in more than one political murder per day, a total of 227 in 1974. Many, perhaps most, of these assassinations are carried out by special squads of plain-clothes military and police officials.

In this perilous situation it is vital for revolutionaries not only to call for united-front defense of left and militant trade-union organizations, but also to warn the masses against placing any confidence in the treacherous anti-working class Peronist regime. The Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party) has done precisely the opposite, seeking to protect itself by repeated expressions of support for the "process of institutionalization" and for the "continuity" of the government. While seven of its own members were gunned down by pro-government thugs last year, the PST continues to proclaim that the main danger is a coup d'état!

Workers Vanguard was the first publication outside Argentina to publicly call attention to the scandalous behavior of the (purportedly Trotskyist) PST which issued, together with the local Stalinists and six bourgeois parties, a declaration calling for bourgeois law and order on the occasion of a meeting with Perón last March 21 (see "PST Caught Redhanded," *WV* No. 49, 19 July 1974). The declaration supports "in all instances the institutional process" and condemns "all those who in one way or another attempt to change it."

This expression of support for the capitalist state is a betrayal of the most fundamental Marxist principles so gross that even the professional hypocrites of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," of which the PST is a sympathizing organization, finally made a public protest. However, for appearance's sake, the USec "acknowledged" the PST's cock-and-bull story that its representative, Juan Carlos Coral, did not sign the document even though the PST newspaper (*Avanzada Socialista*) reproduced the document as having been signed by him. This "editorial error" was not corrected by AS for a full three months!

Moreover, only a few days after this "correction" was published the PST attended another meeting of "the eight," this time with the General's wife (and vice president) María Estela, as Perón lay dying. A second declaration was issued, declaring the participants' "support for the process of institutionalization...." Challenged by the USec lead-

ership, the PST again answered that Coral had not actually signed the statement.

The PST supported the declaration's content, however, with the excuse that "the word 'institutionalization' has acquired a meaning in Argentine politics different from the one given in the dictionary. It has become a synonym of fighting to defend or win democratic rights" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 4 July 1974). In fact, "institutionalization" in the mouths of Argentine liberals and the PST social democrats has been used to mean support for bourgeois law and order, as against the terrorism of the police... and of left-wing Peronist and supposedly Marxist guerrillas.

Unable to stay away from these prestigious "summit" meetings of the bourgeois parties, the ubiquitous Coral attended yet another such gathering, called "the multisectorial," on October 8. As we reported in *Workers Vanguard* No. 57 (22 November 1974), he told President María Estela de Perón that the PST "will fight for the continuity of this government, because it was elected by the majority of the Argentine workers and because it permits the exercise of some democratic liberties...."

Coming less than two weeks after the regime's new "security law" outlawing strikes (a measure the PST leader failed to criticize, although he "applaud[ed] without reservation" many clauses of the government's labor legislation), and given his "categorical" denunciation of "terrorist and guerrillaist forms of violence," it is not surprising that Coral's speech to the "multisectorial" was widely interpreted by press and television as support for the government. However, according to the 15 October *Avanzada Socialista* the version of the speech distributed by the government's press office contained "omissions" which altered its meaning; therefore AS published a "textual reconstruction" of Coral's words.

As a "fraternal service" to the PST, its ally in the factional battle raging in the USec, the SWP recently published an English version of Coral's statement (*Intercontinental Press*, 13 January). However, *IP* apparently did a little "reconstructing" itself in order to spruce up the key passage.

For the most part the English translation accurately reproduces the Spanish text. Coral repeats his "firm condemnation of the death of the latest victim of the terror, who happens to be an officer of the armed forces," announces that "all inhabitants of the country should bear the consequences equally" if there is a grave national

"SWP 'Translates' Coral"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 62, 14 February 1975

emergency, equates guerrillaism to coups d'état ("although the aims are different"), etc.

But when we come to the section in which Coral announces that the PST "luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno" ("will fight for the continuity of this government"), this is rendered as: "... will fight to keep this government's term of office from being cut short illegitimately...". This is something quite different. Apparently Joseph Hansen, like Coral & Co., feels that dictionaries are inadequate to interpret what the PST is saying.

Lenin and Trotsky repeatedly stressed the need to defend democratic rights and oppose bonapartist coups. However, the PST "translates" this into supporting "bourgeois democracy," "institutionalization" (including against leftist guerrillas) and the "continuity" of the present government. Aside from the fact that the "democracy" of the bonapartist Peronist regime is in any case quite limited, such a statement can mean nothing but political support for the government and for the parliamentary form of bourgeois class dictatorship. ■

"For the Continuity of this Government..."

—from text of Coral's statement at the 'Multisectorial,' in Avanzada Socialista, 15 October 1974

la violencia fascista.
El socialismo de los trabajadores seguirá luchando contra todos esos factores que crean el clima golpista, y luchará por la continuidad de este gobierno, porque fue elegido por la mayoría de los trabajadores argentinos y porque permite el ejercicio de algunas libertades democráticas.
Son, a su vez, una conquista de la

We socialist workers will continue to struggle against all these factors that are creating the climate for a coup, and will fight to keep this government's term of office from being cut short illegitimately, since it was elected by the majority of the Argentine workers and since it permits the exercise of some democratic freedoms.

—from "Coral's Statement at the Multisectorial," Avanzada Socialista, 15 October 1974, translated in Intercontinental Press, 13 January 1975

"Mirror Image": A Despicable Statement

—from "Declaración del PST," Executive Committee statement issued at the 'Multisectorial,' Avanzada Socialista, 10 October 1974

mentos, con otra amenaza inmediata y directa: la de una militarización creciente de la vida política provocada fundamentalmente por la acción de la guerrilla y su réplica, el terrorismo de la AAA y otras organizaciones de ultraderecha. A esa militarización apuntan objetivamente muchos sectores. Independientemente de las intenciones de los protagonistas, abre una dinámica hacia el golpe militar.

This second threat is represented by a growing militarization of political life prompted fundamentally by the activity of the guerrillas and their mirror-image—the terrorists of the AAA and other organizations of the ultraright.

—from "PST Statement at the 'Multisectorial,'" translated in Intercontinental Press, 28 October 1974

IV.

Moreno's Left Face

Elsewhere in this bulletin we reprint numerous excerpts from materials documenting Nahuel Moreno's decades-long cover for Peronism in his native Argentina; his opportunistic support to populist generals from Peru's Velasco to Panama's Torrijos; his chameleon-like shifts of political coloration, from gung-ho guerrillaist to snivelling social democrat; and his scandalous financial dealings. But that does not account for the apparent leftism of the documents of his Bolshevik Faction and its predecessor, the Bolshevik Tendency (BF/BT). For in the case of Moreno the contrast between theory and practice is so dramatic that he has developed a "method" capable of justifying almost any betrayal.

For almost a decade, from 1968 through 1977, the United Secretariat was rent by acute factional struggle between a centrist International Majority Tendency (IMT) led by Ernest Mandel and the reformist Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF) led by the American SWP of Joe Hansen/Jack Barnes and (initially) Moreno's Argentine PST. While the Mandelites chased after a Maoist/Guevarist "new mass vanguard" in Europe and Latin America, the LTF used pseudo-orthodox arguments to attack guerrillism from the right (not unlike the pro-Moscow CPs). After Barnes and Mandel dissolved the factions in 1977, underlying differences remained but a temporary unity was obtained at the USec helm. So simply by standing still while the ex-IMT galloped to the right, Moreno suddenly appears as a "left" critic of the "reunified" rotten bloc:

"Before, it [the IMT] had bent to the ultraleftism of a predominantly student radicalized vanguard. Now, it is bending to the pressures of Eurocommunism and a trade-union and middle class vanguard, which are transmission belts for liberal ideology and the public opinion of the imperialist countries...."

"This capitulation is what has made the convergence between the ex-IMT and the leaders of the SWP, i.e., the ex-LTF, possible."

—"Declaration and Platform of the Bolshevik Faction," [SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, July 1979

An uninitiated reader might well confuse such passages with Trotskyist critiques of the revisionist USec by the international Spartacist tendency (iSt). Of course, the iSt and its precursors have been denouncing the United Secretariat as a rotten bloc since its inception in 1963, while Moreno seems to have discovered this fact only in the last two years (after being part of every USec betrayal and unprincipled maneuver for the previous decade and a half). And there is the telltale fact that Moreno's BF/BT consistently described the Mandelite majority as "ultraleft" while we label the IMT *centrist*. But the most striking difference is that the Morenoite attack on the USec leadership consists solely of organizational atrocity stories plus evidence of revisionism at the most general theoretical level. Concrete political *betrayals*, where their line means defeat for the working class, are almost never mentioned.

The Bolshevik Faction has had some pretty harsh words to say against the USec's 1977 resolution on "Socialist Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." In a document endorsed by the BG, Moreno says it "completely revised the revolutionary Marxist position on the dictatorship of the proletariat." Mandel, he says, is "filling the Marxist conception of workers revolution and proletarian dictatorship with a Eurocommunist content and program ..." (*The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* [1979]). Fine, but where do the Morenoites denounce the USec for capitulating to the Eurocommunists in the class struggle? What about the electoral support to popular fronts given by both the SWP and ex-IMT, who call for votes to the reformist workers parties involved in such class-collaborationist coalitions? The BF doesn't breathe a word of criticism, for its own electoral policies are just as (or even more) tailist.

Perhaps the best example of how Morenoite "orthodoxy" in the abstract is translated into opportunism in the concrete is the case of Portugal 1975. During the spring and summer the situation was polarizing rapidly: the ruling Armed Forces Movement (MFA) and its Stalinist allies escalated their leftist rhetoric, in part to co-opt embryonic factory committees and collective farms which were beginning to sprout up. On the other side, the Socialist Party of Mário Soares sided with more conservative officers and civilian reactionaries in mounting an anti-Communist mass mobilization. The SWP, in response, wholeheartedly took up the cause of the CIA-financed Portuguese SP. Not wanting to be tied to this right-wing unholy alliance, Moreno began making trouble in the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction and finally split over the SWP document, "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" (October 1975). This was the origin of the Bolshevik Tendency.

The future BTers were hard on the SWP, accusing it of thinking "the possibility exists that the SP could break with the bourgeoisie and take power in Portugal today," and that the SP is "no longer counterrevolutionary" ("Letter from Former LTF Members to the International Executive Committee," [SWP] *Internal Information Bulletin*, March 1977). The "Declaration of the Bolshevik Tendency" took the LTF to task because it "did not indicate a single task or slogan in relation to the 'workers commissions,'" and condemned Hansen's "categorical refusal to raise the policy and slogan for centralizing these committees." The SWP, concluded the BT, had "an essentially bourgeois-democratic program" for Portugal ([SWP] *IIDB*, January 1977). These same points were made repeatedly—and much more sharply—in *Workers Vanguard* (e.g., "SWP/OCI Tail Counterrevolution in Portugal," *WV* No. 75, 29 August 1975).

But *WV* emphasized above all the need to fight "class collaboration"—tying the workers to the bourgeois officer

corps." On the issue of soviets, we said that for an authentic Trotskyist party the key issue was "calling for independence of the workers commissions and popular assemblies from the MFA..." ("Soviets and the Struggle for Workers Power in Portugal," *WV* No. 82, 24 October 1975). The program of Moreno & Co. was exactly the opposite. Having decided to abandon the social-democratic camp (in the early summer he was for participating in the SP's anti-Communist demonstrations), Moreno simply switched horses and plunked his money down for the MFA. Thus in a long polemic against SWPer Gus Horowitz he argued that this faction of the officer corps of the capitalist army was *not* classically bonapartist and was "Kerenskyist" and petty-bourgeois (N. Moreno, "Revolución y contrarrevolución en Portugal," *Revista de América*, July-August 1975).

Moreno's supporters of the Portuguese PRT went even further, and in an article entitled "A Necessary Rectification: The MFA and the Revolution in Portugal" (*Combate Socialista*, 10 July 1975) discovered a "semi-soviet sector" of the bourgeois officer caste. But they did not come up with this dangerous revision of Marxism by themselves. In an April 1975 report to the PRT national committee Moreno referred to the MFA as "the superstructural expression of the beginning of the formation of soviets in the army" and says that it may be "a petty-bourgeois movement that reflects the revolutionary process"—in which case, "We have to struggle within this process, and understand that there are differentiations inside the Armed Forces Movement itself" (PRT Internal Discussion Bulletin No. 2). So while correctly attacking the SWP for chasing after Soares and raising a purely bourgeois-democratic program for Portugal, Moreno talks about soviets...and runs after the populist MFA with its demagogic talk of "people's power."

Moreno has developed this Janus-faced policy into a veritable science. Thus on the second issue over which he broke from the SWP—Angola—he takes his former mentors severely to task for failing to call for military victory to the MPLA in the crucial months after November 1975, when it was facing a combined attack by South Africa and the CIA-aided FNLA/UNITA coalition. Moreno drew a close parallel between Angola and Vietnam (falsely, for in the case of Angola it was simply an

imperialist invasion, whereas in Vietnam this was overlaid on a civil war which saw two opposing *class* camps). But for Moreno this parallel presented certain problems, for *in Vietnam the SWP also did not call for military victory to the NLF*. Instead its line was bourgeois pacifism, appealing to the defeatist wing of the Democratic Party. And the PST vociferously *defended* the SWP's antiwar policies when they were bloc partners in the LTF. (Moreno also fulminated against the "ultraleft sectarians" of the Spartacist League who said the SWP's coalitions were mini-popular fronts, and who uniquely demanded "All Indochina Must Go Communist!")

What to do? For an old hand like Moreno the trick was simple: to call for an NLF victory was a "world strategy" while "Bring the Boys Home" was its "tactical adaptation" to the backward consciousness of the American masses. Thus, "Some comrades of the IMT severely criticized the SWP for not raising in the U.S. the demand 'Victory to the NLF.' They were wrong in identifying the international policy with national tactics and demands" (N. Moreno, *Angola: La revolución negra en marcha* [1977]). So as long as you vote for a USec resolution, which is buried in the documents section of *Intercontinental Press* (and which no one can pin on you anyway, since both the SWP and PST are only "fraternally related" to the USec), it is alright to fail to call for the defeat of one's "own" imperialism. Glory, hallelujah, the bloc with Democratic Senator Vance Hartke is principled, and there is no need to get beaten up by pro-war workers while distributing defeatist propaganda in front of the factories (as happened to the Bolsheviks in World War I). How convenient. Why didn't Jack Barnes think of that?

Moreno dreamed up a similar subterfuge a few years earlier when the LTF got into a shouting match with the IMT over who supported popular frontism: the LTF said Mandel and his friends did, by supporting the French Union of the Left; the IMT said Hansen/Moreno did, because their Uruguayan supporters called for a vote to the Frente Amplio (Broad Front). (Answer: both support popular frontism.) Moreno argued that the Uruguayans had made an "error, not a betrayal." Furthermore, "it was a good move to enter the Frente Amplio because it helped our work in the mass movement." You see, "It would indeed be a betrayal to electorally support a popular front or a bourgeois nationalist movement without denouncing it as a betrayer of the workers' movement. That is: voting in itself is for us a tactical and not a principled question" (N. Moreno, "A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain," [SWP] *IIDB*, January 1974).

Moreno didn't invent that one, however. The author is Andrés Nin. Even after the Spanish POUM participated in the Popular Front coalition during the February 1936 elections, Nin, its most left-wing leader, continued to denounce the Popular Front in the abstract. For example: "Hence the policy of the Popular Front, by presenting the problem as a struggle between bourgeois democracy and fascism, sows fatal illusions among the working masses and detours them from accomplishing their historic mission, preparing, by this very act, the victory of fascism."

—"La acción directa del proletariado y la revolución española," July 1936, in A. Nin, *Los problemas de la revolución española (1931-1937)*



WV Photo

Spartacist League took sides in Vietnam war. SWP refused to call for NLF victory.

Not bad, on paper. But the POUM helped put the Popular Front in power, thereafter acting as its left tail while

mouthed abstract slogans about "socialism or fascism." And when the showdown came in the Barcelona May Days of 1937, Nin refused to mobilize the workers to overthrow the fragile Popular Front, thereby "preparing the victory of fascism." Presumably Nin, too, thought "voting is a tactical question."

Not so the international Spartacist tendency, for whom opposition to class collaboration is a matter of principle.

This is what distinguishes us not only from the misnamed "Bolshevik Faction" but the entire United Secretariat swamp. Although as a cynical con man Nahuel Moreno resorts to the eclectic "method" of centrism—what Trotsky called "crystallized confusion"—his appetites and real program are those of a hardened reformist. In either case, as the example of Nin shows, the end result is the same, and it is the working class that pays the price.

Portugal

Left Criticism of SWP...

One theoretical consequence of this conception of bourgeois democracy and its relationship to imperialism is directly revisionist: the reformist parties are no longer counterrevolutionary since no one can conceive of these parties without bourgeois democracy. We are not saying they now think these parties have become revolutionary but that, given this conception, they have ceased being counterrevolutionary. If we go very carefully through the two versions of "Key Issues of the Portuguese Revolution" as well as the other writings of the SWP compañeros we shall see that, by omission, there is a clear tendency toward making this theoretical assertion in regard to the Portuguese SP.

—from "Letter from Former LTF Members to the International Executive Committee," SWP Internal Information Bulletin, March 1977

The Crisis in the LTF

As the Portuguese revolution was developing, the SWP was changing its initial, correct position. That position was to develop the embryos of dual power in order to transform them into soviets, in combination with democratic slogans such as "Constituent Assembly," "freedom of press," "Against the MFA government," "CP-SP united front and government." The IMT refused to raise these last slogans.

The change in the SWP's policy was codified in a document entitled "Key Issues of the Portuguese Revolution," which it submitted for a vote in the LTF. This document dropped the demands for the development and centralization of the demonstrations and the embryonic organs of dual power—the land and factory occupations, the workers and soldiers committees, etc.—and all the transitional and revolutionary slogans in favor of an exclusively democratic program.

The theoretical basis for this reformist policy and program was expressed in Com. la Navack...

—from "Declaration and Platform of the Bolshevik Faction," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, July 1979

...support to the MFA

—from Nahuel Moreno, "Revolución y contrarevolución en Portugal," Revista de America, July-August 1975, translated in SWP Internal Information Bulletin, March 1977

sioned officers toward normal strict military discipline indispensable to the maintenance of the government that had brought into being. But the MFA—and we should bear this very much in mind—was not the same as the higher ranks of officers. And it resisted submitting to the discipline of the top officials. It thus reflected within the army the modern middle class, whose expectations were not identical to those of Spínola and the Portuguese oligarchy.

The participation of the Communist party in the government was... in the

Ate hoje sempre caracterizamos o MFA como um movimento burgues, defensor, na ausência de qualquer partido estruturado da classe dominante ou sequer de um aparelho de Estado solido, dos interesses fundamentais do Capital, se bem que tambem muitas vezes obrigado, pela posição de arbitro «supra-partidário» em que se encontra colocado, a castigar os sectores tradicionalmente mais privilegiados da burguesia, por forma a defender os interesses globais dessa mesma classe.

uma rectificação necessária

o MFA e a Revolução em Portugal

A Necessary Rectification

The MFA and the Revolution in Portugal

"Up to now we always characterized the MFA [Armed Forces Movement] as a bourgeois movement, a defender, in the absence of any structured party of the ruling class or even a solid state apparatus, of the fundamental interests of capital..."

"The product of these traits [of the Portuguese revolutionary process] was, in a way, the MFA. We can understand it as a new phenomenon, that is, a momentary result of a very particular reality, the reality of the Portuguese Revolution. It was initially a movement, a petty-bourgeois reaction of a sector of the officials of an army pounded by war and massacred by the military defeat in Africa.

"In the same way as the working-class parties of the coalition, the MFA participates in and commits itself to the policy of the bourgeois government. But this does not mean identifying the government and the armed forces, nor identifying the MFA with the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, the facts are demonstrating that... the worsening of the crisis deepens the cleavages within the MFA and the semi-soviet tendency implied by one of its poles..."

— from *Combate Socialista* (newspaper of the Morenoites Portuguese PRT), 10 July 1975

fundamentais do processo português. O produto destes traços e, de certa forma, o MFA. Podemos compreendê-lo como um fenómeno novo, quer dizer, um resultado momentâneo de uma realidade muito particular, da realidade da Revolução portuguesa. E inicialmente um movimento, uma reacção pequeno-burguesa de um sector dos oficiais de um exercito martelado e massacrado pela derrota da guerra.

Da mesma maneira que os partidos operários da coligação, o MFA participa e compromete-se com a política do Governo burguês. Mas isto não significa identificar o Governo e as Forças Armadas, nem identificar o MFA com a burguesia. Pelo contrário, os factos vêm demonstrando que para além da tolerância de figuras que são uma garantia para o capitalismo nacional e internacional, o agravamento da crise aprofunda as clivagens no MFA e a tendência semi-sovietica que um dos seus polos implica, dão ao MFA uma instabilidade que este transmite ao Governo no seu conjunto, o que leva o bonapartismo no movimento a uma situação de crise.



Diário de Notícias

Leaders of the Portuguese Armed Forces Movement. Morenoites discovered a "semi-soviet" sector of the MFA.

It appears to us that the IMT leaders do have a serious political difference with us. They seem to be opposed in principle to limited agreements or public actions involving bourgeois sectors in the struggle against fascism or other ultrareactionary forces. We think that they are not alone in taking an ultraleft position of this kind.

We should like to remind them that at the height of the antiwar movement in the United States, quite a few petty-bourgeois and even bourgeois figures sought to share the platform in the giant rallies that were staged at the time. The Trotskyists in the

United States did not oppose this. In fact, they favored it.

But how the ultralefts screamed! They considered this to be proof positive that the Socialist Workers party had formed an "interclass political bloc" with the liberal wing of the Democratic party, thereby falling into the Social Democratic "policy" of class collaborationism. It is one of the main "proofs" still thrown at the SWP by the ultralefts in the United States (and elsewhere) to bolster the charge that the SWP has "degenerated," turned "reformist," and "betrayed" the working class.

—from PST/LTF, "In Reply to the IMT's Open Letter Number 2," Intercontinental Press, 20 January 1975

Eurocommunism

Finalmente, Rodríguez señala que el levantamiento por parte del imperialismo yanqui de la bandera de los derechos humanos en los estados obreros, y su aliento a los opositores a la burocracia, es parte importante de este plan imperialista contra los estados obreros.

Estas consideraciones, que compartimos, ubican al eurocomunismo o proceso de socialdemocratización de los PC en una dimensión más amplia. Tiene que ver con las dos caras del plan imperialista. Con la de establecer ligazones directas con él para garantizar gobiernos de la "contrarrevolución democrática" tipo Soares que contengan el ascenso del movimiento obrero europeo. Y tendrá que ver, en la medida en que sea necesario, con la profundización de este proceso.

En este segundo aspecto, la posición de los PC europeos en apoyo a los disidentes soviéticos, sin dejar de tener sus aspectos positivos, contribuye a reforzar el plan imperialista. Mandel ve en este apoyo a la imperialista soviética uno de los fundamentales motivos de fricción entre los partidos eurocomunistas y el aparato stalinista. Así, en su trabajo "Las tres dimensiones del eurocomunismo"

"Finally, [PSTer Marcela] Rodríguez [writing on 'The Carter Plan: New Counterrevolutionary Policy' in Revista de América No. 3] indicates that for Yankee imperialism raising the banner of human rights in the workers states, and its encouragement of opponents of the bureaucracy, is an important part of the imperialist plan against the workers states.

"These considerations, which we share, locate Eurocommunism, or the process of social-democratization of the CPs, in a broader dimension. It has to do with the two faces of the imperialist plan—with establishing direct ties in order to guarantee governments of 'democratic counterrevolution' a. la Soares to hold back the upsurge of the European workers movement....

"In this second aspect, the position of the European CPs in support of the Soviet dissidents, while retaining its positive aspects, contributes to reinforcing the imperialist plan. Mandel sees in this support to Soviet dissidents one of the fundamental causes of friction between the Eurocommunist parties and the Stalinist apparatus."

—from Eugenio Greco, "Eurocommunism: A New Crisis of World Stalinism," Revista de America, August 1977

Greco's arbitrary approach has already apparently led him to flirt with positions that are really different from those of the rest of the Trotskyist movement and would lead him very far astray if he developed them consistently. He does this when he says that the Eurocommunist CPs' defense of the dissidents against bureaucratic repression promotes an "imperialist plan" against the workers states, and when he makes statements indicating that the Eurocommunist CPs are becoming a bat-

tering ram for imperialism against the economic underpinnings of these states.

Greco is not the first to advance these positions. Among those claiming to be Trotskyist, the award for originality goes to such sectarian groups as the Spartacist League in the United States and the Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain. Let us hope that Greco proves capable of seeing the deadly logic involved and that he draws back in time.

—from Gerry Foley, "Eurocommunism, Goldilocks, and the Three Bears: In Reply to Eugenio Greco," Intercontinental Press, 5 December 1977

V.

Opportunist Chameleon Sui Generis

excerpted from:

"World Trotskyism Rearms"

—Spartacist, No. 20, April-
May 1971

The international Trotskyist movement stands before its definitive crossroads. The revisionist currents which have dominated world Trotskyism over the past period are in crisis. In the aftermath of recent developments, most particularly the May-June 1968 explosion of the French working class which stunningly demonstrated anew the bankruptcy of the impressionists who had abandoned the proletarian internationalist strategy for revolution, the revisionists find themselves as challenged by authentic Trotskyism as do the Maoists and other non-Marxist currents. Even the most ardent revisers of Trotskyist theory are now finding themselves compelled to argue on the terrain of Leninism grown rusty and distorted in their minds by years of abuse, abandonment and betrayal. The conglomerations which for years have masqueraded as international political tendencies are forced willy-nilly into reopening the disagreements which had long laid buried by mutual consent. New currents are seeking the answers to the questions: what went wrong with the Fourth International? how can an authentic Trotskyist politics be constructed over the theoretical ruins of revisionism? And such currents are emerging even within the very heart of the revisionist "internationals" themselves!

The arch-revisionist United Secretariat (which prefers to be known as "the Fourth International") has already seen splits from its sections in Germany, England, Argentina, Ceylon and Belgium. But more serious, in its terms, is the factional war exhibited at its "Ninth World Congress" in early 1969, primarily between the European groups, whose major force is the French Ligue Communiste, and its U.S. political associate, the Socialist Workers Party, between the Ligue's aggressive *centrism* and the SWP's deepening *reformist* impulse.

Livio: an Ersatz "Che"

The key dispute at that Congress revolved around the Europeans' draft resolution on Latin America, whose thrust was that the U. Sec. itself should seek to initiate guerilla warfare in a selected country in Latin America. This proposal was only the logical imple-

mentation of the U.Sec.'s long-time political and theoretical capitulation to Castroism. The U.Sec. maintained that Cuba, after breaking with capitalism under the leadership of a petty-bourgeois radical formation, had established an essentially undeformed workers state despite the lack of any conscious intervention by the Cuban working class as a class and without the revolutionary leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard party. Cuba was, according to the U. Sec., a dictatorship of the proletariat lacking only the "forms" of workers democracy, and Castro was "an unconscious Marxist." The Europeans now propose to extend this pattern to the rest of the "Third World," and put forward peasant guerilla warfare as the new strategy for the "Fourth International." Livio Maitan, the leader of the Italian section and a main proponent of this turn, enthused over the advantages of the "Fourth International" having a state of its own to give it relevance and prestige. And this is perfectly logical, for what relevance can authentic Trotskyism possibly have for these revisionists who have at bottom despaired of *proletarian* revolution?

Hansen Heads Right Wing

A minority at the Congress, led by the SWP's Joseph Hansen, opposed the proposed turn. Resorting to a rediscovery of "orthodoxy," Hansen maintained that any form of armed struggle must be seen as a tactic subordinate to the building of a Trotskyist vanguard party. But the Hansen-SWP initiative in the U.Sec.'s capitulation to Castroism, and the class-collaborationist and "Third World" nationalist politics of the SWP domestically, reveal the fundamentally reformist impulse driving the SWP to oppose the guerilla warfare line under the rubric of orthodoxy. Just as the Communist Parties counter the confrontationist urgings of impatient petty-bourgeois radicals with quotations from Lenin opposing adventurism, for the purpose not of upholding Leninism but of practicing reformism, so the SWP now makes use of its formal Trotskyist tradition while opposing its factional antagonists from the right.

The European U.Sec., which competes with the left Maoists and radical syn-

dicalists in the more radical and class-conscious European milieu, is impressionistically chasing after a more "left" line. But the SWP aims at a different constituency: a base of middle-class youth recruited on the basis of the SWP's "success" in building a reformist, single-issue Popular Front against the Viet Nam war. In the long run, the SWP's competitors are not the other erstwhile Trotskyists, nor the Maoist and semi-Maoist confrontationists, but the ghost of American social-democracy.

Its Young Socialist Alliance in effect fills the niche previously occupied by the YPSL-SP, but is unencumbered by the latter's arid anti-communism which is now a detriment rather than an aid to becoming America's mass reformist party. With such a perspective, more or less consciously recognized by at least a section of the SWP leadership, what could be more disastrous than to threaten its precious legality and respectability by the undertaking of anything so illegal as guerilla warfare?...

"Strictly Subordinate to the Discipline of OLAS..."

"Our 'entryism' in OLAS must not be entry basically into its political organization but rather into its military apparatus. Our party is obliged to take up as its number one task developing a technical apparatus strictly subordinate to the discipline of OLAS for the purpose of carrying out such technical tasks as OLAS may set, pursuant to its strategy of struggle for power. Our entry into OLAS can have no other significance." (The Document quoted by Germain. Nahuel Moreno, "La revolución latinoamericana y argentina...")

Nothing could more clearly show that our position of Fidel and Che in the stage of continental civil war would be opened up on our continent similar to the one on the indochinese peninsula. Che's guerrilla struggle would be the beginning of this continental civil war. And like the whole international, we believed we had to participate actively and in the front line in this civil war promoted

—from Nahuel Moreno, "A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 4, January 1974

"By its very nature, such an armed struggle will be unable to respect frontiers and will tend to transform itself in a front of continental civil war. If in the past the trade-union was our organisational vehicle for posing the question of power, today OLAS, with its national combat organisations for armed struggle, is the only organisational vehicle for power. We state this, because the democratic or transitional slogans for the struggle for power: workers' federation with Cuba, transform themselves into petty-bourgeois declamatory demands, if they are not ac-

—from Nahuel Moreno, "La Revolución latinoamericana, Argentina y nuestras tareas," 1961, quoted in "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International," by Ernest Germain, SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. X, No. 4, April 1973

With the Government Against the Guerrillas

8. To continue to oppose guerrilla-ism. In their ignorance of, and contempt for, the consciousness of the masses, for what the masses want and feel, the guerrillas fell into terrorist actions against a government that the workers are not yet ready to abandon, particularly in face of a threat from the ultraright. The majority of the working people either ignore or reprobate the terrorist actions of the guerrillas. Moreover, we will continue to explain how the irresponsible course followed by the guerrillas has helped accelerate the repression and increased the danger of a reactionary coup against a workers movement not yet prepared politically to resist

Shouldn't Marxist analysis note that if the workers' movement does not react against the repression this is because it is being carried out in the name of defending a government regarded by the workers as their own that is being physically attacked by a small irresponsible elite? Shouldn't it be said that this guerrilla activity provides an excuse for accelerating the repression, provoking an unnecessarily early crackdown out of proportion to the level reached by the workers' struggles; that this activity enables the bourgeoisie to isolate the vanguard sectors, which cannot find

—from PST/LTF, "In Reply to the IMT's Open Letter Number 2," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XII, No. 4, October 1975

Trotskyism vs. Morenoism on the Popular Front

international Spartacist tendency:

It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any "critical support" to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready. The U.S. imperialists have been able to temporize for the moment—and not immediately try to mobilize a counter-revolutionary coup on the usual Latin American model—because they have softened the anticipated nationalization losses through massive profit-taking over several years.

Within reformist workers' parties there is a profound contradiction between their proletarian base and formal ideology and the class-collaborationist aims and personal

appetites of their leaderships. This is why Marxists, when they are not themselves embodied in a mass working-class party, give reformist parties such "critical support"—against overt agents of capital—as will tend to regroup the proletarian base around a revolutionary program. But when these parties enter a coalition government with the parties of capitalism, any such "critical support" would be a betrayal because the coalition has suppressed the class contradiction in the bourgeoisie's favor. It is our job then to re-create the basis for struggle *within* such parties by demanding they *break* with the coalition. This break must be the elementary precondition for even the most critical support....

—excerpted from "Chilean Popular Front,"
Spartacist, No. 19, November-December 1970

As Trotsky remarked in 1935: "In reality, the Popular Front is the *main question of Proletarian class strategy* for this epoch. It also offers the best criterion for the difference between Bolshevism and Menshevism."

The largest purportedly revolutionary organization formally outside the UP coalition, the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), was incapable of presenting a class opposition to the popular front. While attracting a layer of militant youth fundamentally from the petty bourgeoisie, and periodically criticizing the Communist Party (CP), the MIR never broke from the Popular Unity. Following the September 1970 elections it called on the masses to support Allende; today the MIR is part of the popular front in exile, seeking to "broaden" the class-collaborationist coalition by including even Christian Democrats. The individual heroism of many MIR militants cannot hide the political bankruptcy of these Chilean Castroites, the left cover of the popular front.

Nor did the Chilean disciples of the several self-proclaimed "Fourth Internationals" present a Trotskyist policy of irreconcilable hostility to popular frontism. The sympathizers of the "United" Secretariat (USec) were either mired in perpetual "deep entry" in the Socialist Party (the traditional graveyard for pseudo-Trotskyists in Chile) or fawningly crawling after the MIR. (In fact, the USec played a central role in creating the MIR, but this did not prevent the Castroites from summarily expelling them two years later for "Trotskyism." Such are the rewards of opportunism!) The USec supporters labeled the bourgeois elements of the UP irrelevant, alibiing the Allende regime with the label "reformist" and calling on it to carry out its own bourgeois program....

—excerpted from: "Declaration of Fraternal Relations between the international Spartacist tendency and the Organizacion Trotskista Revolucionaria of Chile," Spartacist, No. 24, Autumn 1977

Moreno and the PST:

"Nosotros aceptamos que la definición trotskista de los Frentes Populares admite distintas interpretaciones. La que creemos más correcta es la que los caracteriza como alianzas entre los partidos y organizaciones obreras y la burguesía imperialista o sus agentes en los países coloniales. Por eso es que, para nosotros, Perón, Cárdenas, el APRA, Castro, la UP Chilena no son Frentes Populares, aunque sean organismos de colaboración de clase, porque todos ellos, en mayor o menor grado, por una u otra vía enfrentaron al imperialismo. Por eso los definimos como movimientos nacionalistas burgueses o pequeño-burgueses.

De la misma manera, el Frente Popular con la burguesía española era distinto de un frente de los obreros catalanes con la burguesía o pequeño-burguesía separatista catalanes. Este último era un movimiento nacionalista y así lo definió Trotsky...."

"We accept that the Trotskyist definition of the Popular Fronts permits different interpretations. The one we think is the most correct is the one that characterizes them as alliances between workers parties and organizations and the imperialist bourgeoisie or its agents in colonial countries. That is why, for us, Perón, Cárdenas, APRA [Peru], Castro, the Chilean UP aren't Popular Fronts, although they may be organisms of class collaboration, because all of them to a lesser or greater degree, in one way or another, confront imperialism. That is why we define them as bourgeois or petty bourgeois nationalist movements.

"In the same way, the Popular Front with the Spanish bourgeoisie was different from a front of Catalan workers with the Catalan bourgeoisie or separatist petty bourgeoisie. The latter was a nationalist movement, which is how Trotsky defined it...."

—from "Carta Abierta a los companeros de Política Obrera," letter from the PST to Política Obrera, 6 September 1974

For us, the Unidad Popular presently takes the shape of a broad democratic and agrarian anti-imperialist movement with a petty-bourgeois leadership, in which almost the entire working class, part of the peasantry, and important sectors of the middle class play a principal role.

The undeniable concessions granted to the workers by the Allende government give it a bonapartist character *sui generis* but...

Despite the fact that official sources may have exaggerated these facts, it is obvious that Allende's government should not be thought of as just another bourgeois government, or worse yet, analogous to the Popular Fronts that were formed in imperialist countries such as France or the United States during the 1940s. In *Revista de América* we have attempted to explain the...

—from Ernesto Gonzalez, "Unidad Popular—A March to Disaster on the 'Peaceful Road,'" *Revista de América*, March-April 1973, translated in *International Socialist Review*, October 1973

The Uruguayan comrades committed their error in the context of this alternative: remain in the Frente and vote for its candidates (the incorrect orientation), or be obliged to leave it, raising a big hue and cry (the correct orientation). The Uruguayan comrades' opportunism had, at least, a weighty rationale: *their work against the Frente Amplio from inside it*. The French comrades' opportunism was, by contrast, gratuitous: they supported the Union of the Left from outside, without even the excuse that that support was formally necessary in order to work to destroy it from within.

Now... These two errors, the Uruguayan comrades' and the French comrades', are serious errors, but are not a betrayal in any way. It would indeed be a betrayal to electorally support a popular front or a bourgeois nationalist movement without denouncing it as a betrayal of the workers' movement. That is: voting in itself is for us a tactical and not a principled question; what is principled is the political policy, and this must be to *implacably denounce any popular or nationalist front in which the working class finds itself as a betrayal by the reformist workers parties that promote it*.

—from Nahuel Moreno, "A Scandalous Document—A Reply to Germain," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 4, January 1974

Trotskyism vs. Morenoism on Proletarian Revolution

international Spartacist tendency :

9. The partial character of the anti-capitalist revolutions in the colonial world over the past two decades (China, Cuba, North Viet Nam and North Korea) leads us to reaffirm the Marxist-Leninist concept of the proletariat as the key to the socialist revolution. Although existing petty-bourgeois nationalist-led movements against imperialism must be defended, the task of communists is to lead the active intervention of the working class to take hegemony over the national-social struggle. The struggle by the proletarian leadership for *self-determination* of the oppressed nations is a powerful tool to break the grip of petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders on the masses. The Spartacist League fundamentally opposes the Maoist doctrine, rooted in Menshevism and Stalinist reformism, which rejects the vanguard role of the working class and substitutes peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to socialism. Movements of this sort can under certain conditions, i.e., the extreme disorganization of the capitalist class in

the colonial country and the absence of the working class contending in its own right for social power, smash capitalist property relations; however, they cannot bring the working class to *political* power. Rather, they create bureaucratic anti-working-class regimes which suppress any further development of these revolutions towards socialism. Experience since the Second World War has completely validated the Trotskyist theory of the Permanent Revolution which declares that in the modern world the bourgeois-democratic revolution can be completed only by a proletarian dictatorship supported by the peasantry. Only under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat can the colonial and semi-colonial countries obtain the complete and genuine solution to their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation....

—excerpted from: "Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League," 1966, in "Basic Documents of the Spartacist League," Marxist Bulletin No. 9

Moreno and the PST :

"...la vida ha puesto en evidencia las lagunas, omisiones y errores del programa de la Revolución Permanente.... El dogma de que la única clase que puede cumplir las tareas democráticas es la obrera, es falso. Sectores de la clase media urbana y el campesinado son, en ocasiones, los caudillos revolucionarios...."

—from Nahuel Moreno, "La revolución latinoamericana, Argentina y nuestras tareas," 1961, quoted in "Respuesta de Política Obrera al PST," 8 November 1974

"...life has brought out the omissions and errors of the program of Permanent Revolution.... The dogma that only the working class can accomplish the democratic tasks is false. Sectors of the urban middle class and the peasantry are, on occasion, the revolutionary leadership...."

excerpted from:

"Mexican Standoff"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 131, 29 October 1976

Although the presidential elections in Mexico this summer predictably installed the candidate of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), José Lopez Portillo, they nevertheless had some interesting side effects. For the first time in decades a left-wing opposition slate, whose candidate (Valentine Campa) is a member of the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), received substantial write-in support.

Moreover, the Stalinist-initiated ticket included one self-styled Trotskyist party and was supported by two others, all of them associated with different factions in the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (Usec). The sharp three-way polemic between these groups is of particular interest since Mexico is the main arena where representatives of all the competing international tendencies in the Usec have squared off....

The oldest of the self-proclaimed Trotskyist groups, however, the Posadista Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR), has mainly been active in hailing the "revolutionary government" of former president Luis Echeverría and then voting for the PRI's Portillo. Consequently, the POR has gone nowhere, and instead since 1972 two Usec-affiliated groups have grown and managed to gain influence in a segment of the radicalized students. These were the Grupo Comunista Internacionalista (GCI) and the Liga Socialista (LS) which originated in a 1972 split from the GCI.

The GCI was associated with the International Majority Tendency (IMT) of the Usec led by Ernest Mandel, while the Liga Socialista was the local affiliate of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (L-TF) led by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Characteristically, the GCI oriented itself toward an eternal search for a "new mass vanguard" of Castroite-influenced youth, and the LS sought to implant itself in a more sedate academic milieu.

However, beginning last year there was a spectacular revolt in the LS in which the pro-SWP leadership was toppled by agents and supporters of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST), up until then the second major group of the L-TF. Following the LS split last fall/winter the L-TF split internationally as well, with pro-PST elements heading back toward the Mandeliste majority.

In order to oust what it called the

"Marxist professors"—the pro-SWP leaders of the LS—the PST-backed group founded the Militant Tendency (TM), captured a majority of the Liga, elected a new central committee and pushed through new organizational rules. Under these bizarre regulations, the membership was re-registered as candidates for a month's "testing" period to show their "activism," resulting in a classic Stalin-style bureaucratic political purge. Then, in typical Usec fashion, the deposed leadership, now calling itself the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction (FBL), declared itself a "public faction" and began a fight in the public press. The TM, denouncing the old leaders as mired in abstract propaganda, announced it would go to the masses....

PST/TM: Stalinism and Popular Frontism

For the Militant Tendency, a turn to the masses meant capitulation before the Stalinist PCM, the largest left-wing organization in the country. In mid-1975 the PCM had held a large rally in Mexico City at which Communist leaders called for a "Coalition of Left Organizations." Almost immediately after taking control of the Liga Socialista last fall, the new pro-PST leadership suddenly published a "joint PCM-LS electoral program" of 17 points.

It appeared surprising that the PCM had decided to form a bloc with an ostensibly Trotskyist party (particularly since in 1940 the PCM organized an attempt on Trotsky's life before he was finally assassinated by a GPU agent). But the PCM is trying to break out of isolation and for the moment is apparently willing to take any kind of electoral bloc it can get.

The more interesting question is why a so-called Trotskyist tendency should seek an election agreement with a Stalinist party. Hasn't the bitter struggle between Trotskyism and Stalinism over the past 50 years represented the battle between class struggle and class collaboration—between revolution and counterrevolution? What joint program could unite such opposites?

With its Mexican allies organizationally blackjacked by its international bloc partners, the SWP counterattacked by asking embarrassing questions about the Militant Tendency's coalition with the PCM. SWP leader Joseph Hansen wrote a letter (25 October 1975) to the Political Commit-

tee of the Liga Socialista pointing out that a joint electoral platform would only serve to mask other differences. "For example," he wrote, "does the PCM stand for the parliamentary road, for 'peaceful coexistence'?" ([SWP] *Internal Information Bulletin*, March 1976).

The explanation of the TM's opportunist behavior is that it has nothing to do with Trotskyism (nor has the SWP) and had no qualms about forming a bloc with the Stalinists. In fact, the TM revealed in it. On the point which Hansen worried about—"peaceful coexistence"—not only did the PCM support it, but it turned up in the final version of the joint electoral program the following January, with of course a vague pro forma disclaimer by the TM.

SWP/FBL: Look Who's Talking!

The most "orthodox" arguments against the Militant Tendency's participation in a popular-frontist bloc have emanated from the SWP-backed Bolshevik-Leninist Faction. In an article entitled, "Is the Mexican CP No Longer a Stalinist Organization?" (translated in *Intercontinental Press*, 1 March 1976), the FBL takes the TM to task for the statement in the Coalition election program referring to the "socialist objectives" and "revolutionary method" of the signatories.

The Coalition platform, in fact, openly declared that the Mexican CP is no longer a Stalinist organization and has become revolutionary. Challenged on this by FBL spokesmen, the leader of the Militant Tendency yelled out to a crowd at a Campa campaign meeting that "The Communist Party is more revolutionary than you are!" The TM newspaper went on:

"We do not want to educate the masses, because then our task would be to become good professors of Marxism. Our task is to pose concrete solutions to concrete problems.... Therefore we prefer raising a class-struggle program, even if it is not our own, and achieving unity which makes mass work more possible...."

—quoted in [SWP] *Internal Information Bulletin*, July 1976

To charges that it had betrayed Marxism by signing a document calling for "peaceful coexistence," the TM replied blithely that "foreign policy is a problem that interests the masses least now" (*ibid.*)

Against this unashamed anti-Marxist drivel, it is not hard for the FBL to look orthodox. But the TM was able to land some telling blows of its own. If the

program of the Coalition of the Left is really reformist, then the Liga Socialista (Militant Tendency) should be expelled from the USec, it pointed out—well knowing that for the SWP and its allies to propose this obviously appropriate step would have meant bringing the whole shaky USec house of cards crashing down.

Moreover, said TM leader Ricardo Hernández, how can they vote for Campa (as both the LCI and FBL did), while claiming that the Coalition is popular-frontist, and consequently Campa is a candidate "not of a 'class' organization but of class collaborationism" ("Reply to an Essay on Sectarianism," quoted in *ibid.*). A good point, since the SWP/L-TF/FBL repeatedly denounce the IMT's capitulation to popular fronts, yet then turn around and themselves vote for popular-front candidates!

The Mexican situation shows in microcosm the bitter triangular polemic now wracking the USec. The fact that the pro-PST Militant Tendency could go from L-TF pseudo-orthodoxy on the popular front into a class-collaborationist alliance in a matter of a few weeks tells a great deal about the reformist character of the L-TF. And the fact that the most right-wing grouping (both in Mexico and internationally) can effortlessly shift from the international minority to accommodation with the majority speaks volumes about the unprincipled nature of all the factions.

Now a new PRT has been born, at a fusion conference in the "Miguel Enriquez Auditorium" at the National University of Mexico. The 1,000 people present at the meeting reportedly named Mario Roberto Santucho, the murdered leader of the Argentine PRT/ERP, honorary president of the congress. Given the ex-Militant Tendency's unabashed rejection of Trotskyist opposition to popular fronts and the TM's naked Stalinist methods, it is entirely appropriate that the unification should take place under the symbolic auspices of Enriquez and Santucho, two leaders of centrist groups set up by the USec who became renegades. As Santucho was taking the PRT out of the USec, he blasted "the Fourth International" composed of "counterrevolutionary adventurers" and based on a "scarcely redeemable tradition." No doubt in short order we will be hearing similar words from some of the more intrepid renegades from Trotskyism in the Mexican PRT....

excerpted from:

"U.S. Out of Panama Now!"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 203. 28 April 1978

Planteamos entonces la necesidad de apoyar a Torrijos en las actuales negociaciones, y simultáneamente levantamos la consigna "¡U.S. Out of Panama Now!"

Si bien somos conscientes del carácter burgués del gobierno de Torrijos, debemos tener presente el carácter progresivo de su enfrentamiento al imperialismo.

—from Revista de America,
May 1977

caracterizaciones. Sostenemos que Torrijos es un régimen de los que Trotsky definió como "bonapartismo sui generis", esto es un gobierno burgués de una semicolonía que enfrenta en forma parcial al imperialismo, apoyándose, y limitada al imperialismo, en la debilidad de la burguesía nacional, ante el movimiento de masas. La máxima prueba de ello es que Torrijos es el primer gobernante en toda la historia de Panamá que denuncia el tratado que adjudicaba a perpetuidad al canal y su zona al imperialismo yanqui.

—from Revista de America,
June-July 1977 (see article)

With the "far left" groups awakening mass support with agitation against the imperialist treaties, the question of the attitude toward the Torrijos regime becomes a key issue. In various articles the LSR and its leaders (including Miguel Antonio Bernal, who has been exiled from Panama for the last two years as a prominent left opponent of the regime) have made clear that they oppose giving political support to Torrijos, although they are put in something of an embarrassing position because of their simultaneous sympathies for the Castro regime which praises the Panamanian dictator as an "anti-imperialist." However, another wing of the United Secretariat, grouped around Nahuel Moreno of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST), holds that it is necessary to "support Torrijos in the current negotiations" (article in the Colombian Bloque Socialista's *Revolución Socialista* No. 66 of 10 March 1977, reprinted in the Morenoites' *Revista de América* of May 1977).

The Morenoites' support for Torrijos is explicitly political and far reaching. Elsewhere in the article they call for "support to the nationalist policies of Torrijos," state that he is "the representative of the struggle for the recuperation of the canal." This is backed up by the following analysis:

"Although we are aware of the bourgeois character of the Torrijos government, we must keep in mind the progressive character of its confrontation with imperialism....

"Thus the fundamental enemy of the Panamanian masses in this moment is imperialism and not Torrijos."

This is a Stalinist theory of "revolution by stages" in its fullest flower. The article has so many references to the "principal enemy" that one would think it to be written by a Maoist.

In a follow-up article (*Revista de América*, June-July 1977) the Morenoites characterize Torrijos as a "bonapartist sui generis [of a unique kind]" and go on to say that his regime "confronts imperialism in a partial and limited manner.... The ultimate proof of this is that Torrijos is the first ruler in the entire history of Panama who denounces the treaty which handed over the canal and the canal zone to Yankee imperialism in perpetuity." This affirmation is particularly ludicrous because the "in perpetuity" clause was eliminated from the canal treaty in 1936—in response to nationalist agitation among the Panamanian masses—by none other than U.S. imperialist commander-in-chief Franklin D. Roosevelt. Evidently this indicates that he is a bonapartist really sui generis.

It is virtually impossible to talk even of pseudo-Trotskyism in the case of this tendency, which holds that in "Bolivia under Torres, Chile under Allende, Peru under Velasco Alvarado" it was similarly necessary to give "critical" political support to the "bonapartists sui generis" against the imperialists. The whole lesson of Chile was that the Allende popular front paved the way to the victory of the bloody junta by tying the workers to the "anti-imperialist" sectors of the bourgeoisie. Moreno & Co. do exactly the same toward Torrijos as the MIR did toward Allende's UP in Chile. ...



Dirck Halstead

Carter and Torrijos: "a progressive confrontation with imperialism?"

VI.

Moreno the Swindler

The history of Nahuel Moreno's dubious financial dealings is long and sordid. In the 1960's, funds from a Peruvian bank "expropriation" by the Tupac Amaru guerrilla group were supposed to have gotten to Hugo Blanco's peasant unions via Moreno (Hugo Bressano); they never arrived. The story was spelled out in detail by Richard Gott in his book *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America* (1972), but Moreno never answered the charges. In Argentina there were allegations against Moreno's PST for refusing to pay US\$19,000 for an order of 50,000 books by Trotsky printed and delivered by a publishing house (El Yunque) associated with the Política Obrera party.

The money still has not arrived.

In Colombia, he set up a publishing house (Editorial Pluma) with an entrepreneur supplying the cash and Moreno supplying an international distribution network. But when the partner discovered there was no network and only PST material was being published, he sued. Colombian PST members were instructed to buy and distribute Pluma publications on the grounds that it was a party venture; but when the Proletarian Democracy Tendency of the PST asked to see the books, they were reportedly told it was a private publishing house and they could not have access to the records.

What about that Money for Hugo Blanco?

Immediately on arrival in Lima, Martorell sent Pereyra to Cuzco to work with Hugo Blanco. Pereyra was to prepare and organize guerrilla groups, while Blanco was to turn the existing peasant movement into a more solid, cohesive force.

Some time later Hugo Bressano himself, Hugo Blanco's old political mentor and the head of SLATO, arrived in Peru from Argentina. Immediately he began discussions with leaders of various leftist factions. Soon, however, it became clear that there were serious seeds of discord between the group operating out of Cuzco which was thinking in terms of organizing a guerrilla movement, and that of Bressano in Lima which had no intention of supporting anything further than the seizure of land by the peasants and the formation of peasant militias to protect their gains.

The disagreement took the form in the first instance of a refusal by the Cuzco group to consider meeting with the other organizers in Lima. Cuzco, they felt, was the obvious site. The matter was smoothed over by convincing the *Cuzqueños* that it would be worth going to Lima, and eventually Pereyra was sent down to the meetings held in Lima in February 1962.

The first major problem to be solved—indeed the fundamental problem in the whole effort—was that of raising money. In December 1961, one of the branches of the Banco Popular was "expropriated," but all they could secure was 105,000 soles (about \$4000), nearly half of which was in new notes that could not be used since the police knew the numbers.

SLATO had originally offered a subsidy of eight or nine million Argentine pesos (about \$120,000), but Villanueva doubts whether anyone took such a large offer very seriously.¹⁸ However, some time after his arrival in Lima, Hugo Bressano announced his intention of returning to Buenos Aires with a view to winding up the accounts of his organization's branch in Argentina and handing over half a million soles (about \$20,000) to the Peruvian branch as a loan. Bressano arranged that half of this should be turned over in February 1962, and the rest not later than 15 March.

Hugo Blanco's need of the money was becoming increasingly urgent since there were two congresses planned, one of the

peasants of La Convención and Lares, and the other a peasant congress of the department of Cuzco. In both of these there was bound to be a serious clash between the FIR and the Communists. The latter were already planning to expel Hugo Blanco from the Peasants' Federation.

But when it came to the point, no money was forthcoming from Bressano. On 11 March 1962 Alberto Pereyra had to be sent down from Cuzco to Lima to secure the necessary funds from the National Directorate of FIR. The latter, aware that Bressano had no intention of fulfilling his promise, had already embarked on planning a second "expropriation"—this time the branch of the Banco de Crédito de Miraflores, one of Lima's most luxurious suburbs. But the plans for this were not yet ready and in the meantime the organizers in the Cuzco area were getting desperate. At the end of March the Departmental Directorate of FIR in Cuzco sent an ultimatum to Lima calling for a National Congress to be held in Cuzco not later than 5 April. If this was rejected, the Cuzco leadership threatened to take over the National Directorate.

But when this ultimatum reached Lima, it so happened that Bressano had just returned from Buenos Aires. Immediately he accused the Cuzco organizers of lack of discipline, and he ordered that they be expelled from their positions, Hugo Blanco among them.

Meanwhile, on 1 April, FIR's urban group in Lima had at last got hold of the car they planned to use in the attack on the Banco de Crédito, and on 12 April the operation took place. It was a complete success, and the total secured was nearly three million soles (about \$120,000.)

It was decided that half a million soles should be taken to Cuzco straight away. Three hundred thousand soles were to be handed over to Bressano, and the rest were left with a Peruvian in Lima to buy arms.

Apart from the money, a number of important leaders, including Pereyra, Martorell and others, were also scheduled to go to Cuzco. The problem was how to get them and the money safely there. After the assault on the bank in Miraflores, all the roads out of Lima had been closely guarded, and the authorities were so nervous about rumored uprisings in the Cuzco area that it

was practically impossible to get into Cuzco itself without being searched. The obvious solution would have been to send them off in ones and twos by different routes, but instead of this, Bressano decided that they should all go hidden in a lorry.

The Cuzco organizers were firmly opposed to such a mad scheme, and suggested that the lorry should at least go straight to the Valley of La Convención rather than risk entering Cuzco. And they were extremely hostile to the idea of the money accompanying the men. But the SLATO leaders in Lima were equally firm. Men and money would travel in one lorry to Cuzco. Villanueva comments caustically:

It appears really as though the leadership of SLATO rather than finding solutions to problems, took delight in putting the nerves of militants and leaders to the test, playing unnecessarily with fire by placing the entire organization in danger and, what is even worse, jeopardizing the possibilities of the insurrection itself.¹⁴

The words do not seem to be too strong for what subsequently occurred. On the night of 24 April 1962, a hired lorry set out from Lima with a hidden compartment holding nine men. Three days and fifteen police posts later they arrived at Limatambo, within thirty kilometers of Cuzco.

Awaiting them there were a number of the members of the Departmental Directorate from Cuzco. These proposed a change of plan. Instead of driving on into the city, the lorry should

stop a couple of kilometers outside and the men should make their way by separate routes, moving at different hours. But the chief of the group from Lima refused and the lorry continued its journey, arriving in Cuzco at 2 o'clock in the morning.

Hardly was there time for four of the nine men hidden inside to disembark before a police patrol suddenly appeared. Pereyra managed to open fire and he wounded a guard, but he and another were soon captured. The others managed to get away, but the police found on Pereyra the sum of 438,000 soles (about \$17,600.)

That same night, 28 April, a few hours after the capture of the lorry, the surviving leaders from Lima had a meeting with those from Cuzco to discuss how matters should proceed. Martorell took over from Pereyra, but since Hugo Blanco and two of his principal assistants had been earlier demoted by Bressano, another man had to be sent from Lima to take over FIR's Departmental Directorate in Cuzco.

The night before the lorry had left Lima, Bressano, in an emotional farewell, said that he would be flying to Cuzco the next day to take part in the SLATO National Congress that was to take place there. The next day, however, saw Bressano on a plane to Buenos Aires....

—from Richard Gott, *Guerrilla Movements in Latin America*, 1972

The "Arlete Affair" in Portugal

excerpted from:

"CP in Deep Trouble in Portuguese Elections"

—Workers Vanguard,
No. 116, 2 July 1976

What could sharply alter the course of political events in Portugal is the building of a Trotskyist party based on a clear program of class independence, breaking with all wings of the bourgeoisie, including the demagogic left-talking officers. A large part of the support for Carvalho comes from workers disillusioned with the Socialist Party's open support for and the Communist Party's cowardly capitulation to Eanes, behind whose dark glasses there lurks a monocle. A candidate calling for a break with PS/PCP class collaboration, for no confidence in the capitalist army, for the unification of the workers commissions in a national workers assembly, could point the way toward breaking through the vicious circle of "stabilizing parliamentary democracy" vs. military-dominated "people's power."

In Portugal over the last year the two main ostensibly Trotskyist organizations, both allied with the misnamed "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International (Usec), have tailed after the CP and SP. During last fall, the LCI (Internationalist Communist League, allied with the centrist Usec majority led by Ernest Mandel) was part of the "Revolutionary United Front" (FUR) that supported the popular-front Fifth Government of Vasco Gonçalves and

initially included the Communist Party. At the same time, as the Socialist Party was spearheading a reactionary anti-Communist mobilization, the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party, allied with the reformist Usec minority, and in recent months specifically with the Argentine PST) incredibly called for a Soares government.

However, in the presidential elections, initially neither the Communists nor the Socialists were running a candidate (the Pato candidacy was the result of the PCP's inability to find a general it could support), so with no one to tail after the LCI and PRT decided to launch a joint presidential candidate. This was also part of on-again, off-again "unity" discussions between the two Usec sympathizing groups.

Their choice as standard bearer was one Arlete Vieira da Silva, whose picture was published on flyers above the headline: "Arlete, A Woman, A Worker, A Revolutionary." A biographical sketch proclaimed that she had been a member of the PCP for 16 years and was arrested five times, once imprisoned for more than three years. A note in the Usec international organ, *Inprecor* (27 May), went into the details of torture ("the traces can still be seen on her broken wrists"). Following the over-

throw of Caetano, it said, she resigned from the PCP in opposition to the Stalinists' strikebreaking and class collaboration.

However, three weeks after the PRT/LCI candidate was launched, after the necessary 7,500 signatures had been gathered to put her on the ballot and on the eve of the deadline for registration, *both groups suddenly withdrew their support*. What happened? Readers of the PRT's *Combate Socialista* (2 June) were given nothing by way of explanation but an inside story with the laconic title, "The Only Candidacy of Class Independence Ceased to Exist!" This item's only answer to the "many questions which have been asked" about the sudden withdrawal was to refer to "our communiqués" on the subject, which are not printed. "Arlete Vieira da Silva gave us data about her political past which were not true," it says, "thereby not guaranteeing the political and moral fitness which a revolutionary party must demand in order to support a class candidacy...."

A few days earlier, the LCI had withdrawn its support from "Arlete," declaring that she did "not have the past nor the minimum conditions which would permit her to be an intransigent defender of a program of unity and independence of the workers movement." Placing the main blame on the PRT (which had nominated her also in the April parliamentary elections), the LCI shamefacedly admitted that it only belatedly investigated the background of its "revolutionary candidate." And it also said nothing about what it had discovered (*Luta Proletária*, 2 June).

The bourgeois press was more reveal-

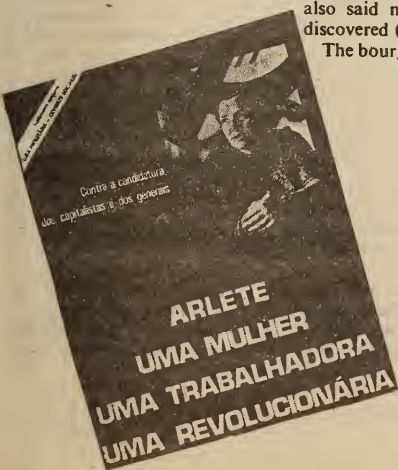
ing. *Expresso* (29 May) reported that it had learned from the PRT that inquiries produced no evidence that its candidate had ever been imprisoned on political charges. In fact, the only court trial of Arlete Vieira da Silva concerned "failure to pay and embezzlement of various household electrical appliances"!! In France, the daily *Rouge* (30 May), newspaper of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), asked in a headline whether "Arlete" was a "Provocateur or Provocateur?"

With the information at our disposal it is impossible to say whether the "Arlete affair" was, as the LCI and PRT suggest, a Stalinist provocation. Certainly the PCP did not come forward until quite late with whatever information it had concerning the dubious character of a former member (whose husband is reportedly a Communist Party militant), while at the same time spreading rumors. Moreover, Cunhal & Co. are no doubt already trying to use this incident in order to spread their usual slander that Trotskyists are provocateurs. What the affair definitely shows, however, is that in their congenital tailing after the reformists, the Pablist liquidators demonstrate a fundamental lack of political seriousness which leads them to grab for an unknown quantity as a presidential candidate simply because she could serve as an advertising gimmick to rip off Communist votes. Their salivary glands are stronger than their brains, and it is clear that in presenting Arlete Vieira da Silva in the elections, the PRT and LCI gave no thought to providing serious leadership to the working masses....

**Deixou de existir
a única candidatura de
independência de classe!**

Terminado o período para a apresentação das candidaturas à Presidência da República a candidatura de Arlete Vieira da Silva não foi aceite. Os seus apoiantas são convidados a apresentarem-se a 10 de Junho.

—from *Combate Socialista*, 2 June 1976
(see article above)



Moreno "Bolshevizes" the Colombian PST

In December 1977-January 1978 the Morenoite leadership of the Colombian PST expelled 315 members (perhaps half the membership?), including the PST's presidential candidate Socorro Ramirez, for forming a tendency and calling for a special convention of the party. This was the culmination of a massive purge which began with the May 1977 suspension of former BT leader Ricardo Sánchez and his subsequent expulsion for "factional activity" and a "disloyal attitude toward the party and its leadership." According to the Morenoite conception of democrat-

ic centralism, all party leadership bodies must maintain discipline in relation to the rest of the party, and hence CCers' discussing differences with rank-and-filers constitutes a violation of party regulations. In addition, the PST leadership banned all tendencies and factions except during pre-conference discussion. Moreno's sidekick Eugenio Greco gave credit where credit is due: "...we learned a great deal from the SWP. We have always considered it to be our teacher. Do you know why? Because it ruthlessly expelled every factionalist."

positions on national policies in the mass movement.

There is an extremely grave fact that involves the moral standing of Trotskyism itself. A campaign was launched in the name of the party to collect funds to aid in setting up the Pluma publishing house in Bogotá. In the leading bodies of the PST, Comrade Moreno held the ambiguous and contradictory position of saying that the publishing house was a party institution when it was a matter of collecting funds and saying that it was a commercial outfit when financial reports were demanded. At the moment Pluma has been subjected to various financial and juridical actions in which the management of the enterprise, irresponsible to say the least, has come under scrutiny. In face of a recent action freezing operations, the Executive Committee of the party has been called on to support the publishing house unconditionally. Such a demand is completely unacceptable. What corresponds to Trotsky's method is the total independence of the party from any kind of financial apparatus, since the party cannot run the risk of engaging in financial enterprises. The party can only intervene indirectly through agents. The identification of Pluma with the PST has been converted into a dead weight on the prestige of the party; it is obvious that we do not approve either morally or politically of the adventurous management of Comrade Moreno in financial questions. On this, in addition, we are asking that detailed accounts be made available to the party in relation to the funds of the PST both as to what was turned over to the publishing house and what the funds were used for.

We consider ourselves to be main promoters of the effort of our party's detachment of the international—any demerit

The worst is that they appeal to tradition. Comrade Hansen told us: you learned nothing. But yes, comrade, we learned a great deal from the SWP. We have always considered it to be our teacher. Do you know why? Because it ruthlessly expelled every factionalist. And not just one, three, or four. More than a hundred comrades of the IMT were thrown out of the SWP. Of course, the SWP said: We did not expel them, they were outside; they said: since they carried out public work and distributed publications different from those of the party, these comrades were outside the party, making another party, therefore they are no longer within our party. Fine. If Comrade Hansen came here to teach us what we did learn from them, he ought to say: Don't expel them, consider them outside the party, that they are a different party. But he did not come here to say that. He came to say: Let them stay inside. I do not recall the SWP vacillating a minute in expelling more than 100 comrades of the IMT. A position that we support unconditionally. This is the method that Comrade Hansen taught us, it is the method that the SWP taught us, and it is the method that we are rescuing from the decadency of the leadership of our international.

The Fausto Amador Case and Its Possible Political Consequences

—from "December 12, 1977, Report to Central Committee of the Colombian PST, by Greco," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XV, No. 2, April 1978

—from "Declaration of the Proletarian Democracy Tendency and Counterreport on the Party Regime," SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin, Vol. XI, No. 2, April 1978

SUBJECT INDEX

SPARTACIST—

Autumn 1972 to Autumn 1980 (Issues Nos. 21-30)

This volume contains the issues of *Spartacist* (English edition) published from Fall [Autumn] 1972 (No. 21) through Autumn 1980 (No. 30). *Spartacist* is the theoretical organ of the international Spartacist tendency which is published with varied contents and frequencies in English, French, German and Spanish.

From its inception in 1964 until the inauguration of the monthly *Workers Vanguard* in October 1971, *Spartacist* was the publication of the Spartacist group (by 1966 the Spartacist League) in the U.S. Beginning with issue No. 21 in the autumn of 1972, *Spartacist* began to be transformed into a journal reflecting the program and work of the Spartacist tendency internationally.

Issues Nos. 21 and 22 continued to be published by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League. Issues Nos. 23 through 26 were published by the Interim Secretariat of the iSt. The issue immediately following the first delegated conference of the iSt in August 1979 (No. 27-28) was published by the International Secretariat of the iSt. Beginning with issue No. 29 (Summer 1980) *Spartacist* became the English-language organ of the International Executive Committee of the iSt and has remained so to date.

In addition to *Workers Vanguard*, the SL/U.S. has from time to time published pamphlets directed toward particular subjects of immediate concern. Some of these pamphlets could well have been published as *Spartacists* and will be included in the bound volumes. This volume contains the "Moreno Truth Kit," published in January 1980. The "Moreno Truth Kit" was first produced as an offset pamphlet in October 1979; we have chosen to include the second edition here because its format more closely corresponds to that of *Spartacist*.

AFGHANISTAN—See also China; West Germany.

- Imperialist Frenzy Over Afghanistan: Hail Red Army!, No. 27-28, Winter 1979-80 (1-5)
- Afghanistan and the Left: The Russian Question Point Blank, No. 29, Summer 1980 (1-4, 21-28)
- Counterrevolution in Afghanistan: The Khomeini Connection, No. 29, Summer 1980 (5)

ARCHIVES OF MARXISM

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- The fullest listing is by SUBJECT. Subject headings are arranged alphabetically. Entries are listed under subject heads chronologically.

- The numbers following each entry headline give the issue number, date and page number(s) for the article. Thus:

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(24, 22, 23)

means the title of the article, Issue No. 21, Fall 1972, beginning on page 24 and continuing on pages 22 and 23.

- No entry is listed twice; see cross references for guidance in locating the subject head for particular articles. Cross references are of two types: those following the word "see" deal centrally with the subject head; those following the words "see also" are related articles. Subject heads in cross references are separated by a semicolon. Thus:

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means that articles that deal with the question of political revolution can be found by going to the subject heads **CHINA, MAOISM** and **POLAND.**

- Individuals mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately unless the article is primarily about the given person. Entries relating to specific countries are listed under geographical headings. Articles concerning international political formations are listed under their organizational names; articles primarily about a national section of a political organization are listed under the appropriate country. General articles about the ostensibly revolutionary left are listed under **LEFT ORGANIZATIONS.**
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